DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 481 481 UD 035 903

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TITLE	The Language of Opportunity: Expanding Employment Prospects for Adults with Limited English Skills.
INSTITUTION	Center for Law and Social Policy, Washington, DC.; National Inst. for Literacy, Washington, DC.
SPONS AGENCY	Ford Foundation, New York, NY.; Joyce Foundation, Chicago, IL.; John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Chicago, IL.; Public Welfare Foundation, Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	2003-08-00
NOTE	64p.; Produced with the National Adult Education Professional Development Consortium.
CONTRACT	ED-02-PO-1535
AVAILABLE FROM	Center for Law and Social Policy, 1015 15th Street, NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20005. Tel: 202-906-8000; Fax: 202-842-2885; Web site: http://www.clasp.org.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Evaluative (142)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Adults; *Employment Opportunities; *English (Second Language); Immigrants; *Job Training; *Limited English Speaking; Literacy Education; *Low Income Groups; Second Language Instruction

ABSTRACT

This paper describes the demographics and economic circumstances of low income adults with limited English proficiency (LEP), noting the language and job training services available to them and providing recommendations for policy and practice that would increase opportunities to gain access to higher paying jobs. More then eight million working-age U.S. adults speak English poorly or not at all. Most are immigrants representing a wide range of countries. Over the next 2 decades, the percentage of LEP workers will continue to increase with continued growth in immigration and the aging of the native-born workforce. Many immigrants lack education credentials and have low levels of literacy. They are concentrated in low-wage work and may live in poverty. Available research shows that the best programs to deliver English language, literacy, and job training combine job training with basic skills instruction or provide a mix of services. Recommendations for program design include: creating programs that combine language and literacy services with job skills training; creating career pathways for LEP adults; considering the merits of bilingual job training in areas where English is not necessary for job training; and offering short-term bridge programs that transition participants to job training and higher education more quickly. Several programs that illustrate some of these promising practices are described in the appendix. (Contains 99 endnotes.) (SM)

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August 2003

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Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank those whose financial support made this report possible: the National Institute for Literacy, the Ford Foundation, the MacArthur Foundation, the Moriah Fund, the Joyce Foundation, and the Public Welfare Foundation. We are also grateful for other support for our workforce development efforts given by the Annie E. Casey Foundation and an anonymous donor. We would also like to thank John Comings of the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy, Shawn Fremstad of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, Gayle Hamilton of the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation, Tyler Moran of the National Immigration Law Center, Garrett Murphy of the National Adult Education Professional Development Consortium (NAEPDC), and Johan Uvin of the Commonwealth Corporation, for reviewing a draft and providing helpful comments.

We are especially grateful to the staff and the students at the sites we visited for helping us learn about their programs and these issues. In particular, we would like to thank the following individuals: at the Center for Employment Training (San Jose, California), Erica Huey; at the Chinese American Service League (Chicago, Illinois), Ricky Lam, Edward Zita, and Lois Chen; at El Paso Community College (El Paso, Texas), Sara Martinez; at the Guadalupe Center (Kansas City, Missouri), Memo Lona; at the HIRE Center (Milwaukee, Wisconsin), Roger Hinkle, Bertha Gonzalez, and Anne Walsh; at the Instituto del Progreso Latino (Chicago, Illinois), Tom Dubois, Betsy Sweet, and Chris Carstens; at the International Institute of the East Bay (Oakland, California), Eve Castellanos and Carrie Parrish; at the International Institute of Minnesota (St. Paul, Minnesota), Jane Graupman and Michael Donohue; at Lifetrack Resources (St. Paul, Minnesota), Jan Mueller and Tom Cytron-Hysom; at Jewish Vocational Services (San Francisco, California), Jim Torrens, Crystelle Egan, and Tony Albert.

The Language of Opportunity: Expanding Employment Prospects for Adults with Limited English Skills was funded in part under contract ED-02-PO-1535 between the National Institute for Literacy and NAEPDC. Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the organizations or agencies that provided funding for this report. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Institute or any agency of the U.S. Government.

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Executive Summary

Adults who have limited English skills represent a significant and growing segment of the workforce in the United States. More than eight million working-age adults in the United States—5 percent of all adults—speak English very poorly or do not speak it at all. Most are immigrants representing a wide range of countries and cultural backgrounds. Over the next two decades, the percentage of American workers whose English is limited will keep increasing due to continued growth in immigration and to the aging of the native-born workforce. In fact, immigrants are projected to account for *all* of the net growth in the 25- to 54-year-old workforce during this time period.[1] Immigrant populations are growing across the nation, even in states and localities that have not historically been immigrant destinations.

While some immigrants are highly educated, many lack education credentials and have low levels of literacy. As a result, they are concentrated in low-wage work and many live in poverty. Moreover, the 1996 welfare reform law eliminated some publicly funded supports for immigrants, which may have worsened their economic condition.

Individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP) clearly need to improve their English language abilities and acquire job-specific skills if they are to advance in the labor market. Unfortunately little scientific research has been conducted on the most effective ways to deliver English language, literacy, and job training services to this population. The best available data come from the extensive scientific research conducted on employment programs for other groups of low-skilled individuals, principally those receiving cash assistance or welfare—a group that includes immigrants and refugees with limited English skills as well as native-born Americans. This research shows that the most effective programs for moving low-income individuals into work combine job training with basic skills instruction or provide a mix of services, including job search, education, and job training. These programs produced larger and longer-lasting effects on employment and earnings than programs in which the primary program activity was job search or basic education.

More help is urgently needed. Current resources for language and job training services are dwarfed by the need. In addition, few programs focus on providing the nexus of language, cultural, and specific job skills that is key to helping low-income adults with limited English skills increase their wages and economic status—and to helping our nation's economy grow. Failure to assist immigrants in

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improving their language and job skills is likely to hurt workforce productivity over the long term. Other key national priorities, such as meeting high educational standards in our public schools and helping welfare recipients move toward economic self-sufficiency, also depend in critical ways on expanding opportunities for individuals with limited English skills and helping them gain the skills they need to get ahead economically and socially.

In this report, we provide recommendations for creating high-quality education and training services for adults with limited English skills. Because scientific research on such services is so limited, only a few of these recommendations are drawn from scientific evaluations. Most of these recommendations are drawn from other, non-experimental research in the fields of adult English as a second language (ESL) and training and from site visits and interviews with practitioners at promising ESL programs (see the Appendix for profiles of these programs). We provide recommendations on ways to improve program design and operations and then suggest steps national and state policymakers can take to expand and support effective services for this population.

Recommendations for program design include:

- **Create programs that combine language and literacy services with job skills training.** To make this approach work for immigrants who speak little English, language instruction should be tied to training in particular occupations and should incorporate key elements, including general workplace communication skills, job-specific language needed for training, certification and testing, and soft skills to help navigate U.S. workplace culture.
- **Adapt existing education, employment, and training programs to the needs of individuals with limited English skills.** These adjustments include using assessments appropriate for measuring language proficiency, not just basic skills, building on existing work experience and educational background, hiring bilingual staff, and using "hands-on" training to make job training more accessible.
- **Offer short-term bridge programs that transition participants to job training and higher education more quickly.** Currently, LEP adults must typically follow a sequential path through education and training that starts with participation in a general English language program (which may require completion of several levels), moves to the acquisition of a GED, and then offers possible participation in a job training program or higher education. For most adults with little English and few resources, this path takes much too long.
- **Create career pathways for adults with limited English skills.** Because wage advancement is critical to long-term success in the labor market, staff should work with participants to shift their focus from "getting a job" to "planning for a career."
- **Consider the merits of bilingual job training in areas where English is not necessary for job placement.** In some areas in the United States—for example along the U.S.-Mexico border and in large ethnic enclaves in Chicago or Los Angeles—English proficiency is not necessarily a requirement for entry-level jobs.
- **Provide bilingual advising and job development responsive to the needs of foreign-born adults trying to adjust to the expectations of U.S. society.** Successful programs often include support and advising conducted by bilingual individuals who are sensitive to cross-cultural issues, such as women being discouraged to take on work considered to be a "man's job" or families living in crisis as a result of having been uprooted.

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Specific actions federal and state policymakers can take to improve labor market outcomes for individuals with limited English include:

- Make combined language, literacy, and training services to adults with limited English a key focus of federal adult education and employment and training programs.
- Make federally funded employment and training services under the Workforce Investment Act more accessible to job seekers with limited proficiency in English and provide referrals to appropriate training.
- Give states the flexibility under the welfare law to provide low-income LEP parents with services designed to increase their skills and thus their earning potential.
- Allow states to provide Temporary Assistance for Needy Families benefits and services to legal immigrants regardless of their dates of entry.
- Address the needs of low-income LEP adults in federal higher education policies.
- Fund scientifically based research on "what works" in training and education for adults with limited proficiency in English.
- Link federally funded English language and job training efforts and promote program improvement through common definitions for data collection and technical assistance across adult education, ESL, and job training programs.
- Assist states and localities with new and growing immigrant populations to create an infrastructure of workforce development services for them.
- Support the development of "ESL workplace certificates," which establish English language competencies needed in particular jobs.

If federal and state governments and local programs adopted the kinds of changes described here, and those changes were accompanied by substantially increased funding, many more LEP adults could improve their employment prospects. And increasing the economic well-being of our country's large and growing immigrant population would pay important dividends not only for these adults and their families, but also for our nation as a whole.

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Introduction

Adults who have limited English skills, usually immigrants or refugees, often face poor labor market prospects. The number of such individuals in the U.S. workforce has grown dramatically over the past decade—accounting for half of all workforce growth—yet the workforce development implications of this growth have received scant attention.[2] Current resources for language and job training services are dwarfed by the need. Moreover, few programs focus on providing the nexus of language, cultural, and specific job skills that is key to helping low-income adults with limited English skills increase their wages and economic status—and to helping our nation's economy grow.

More help is urgently needed. Virtually all of our nation's new workforce growth for the foreseeable future will come from immigration, so failure to assist immigrants in improving their language and job skills is likely to hurt workforce productivity over the long term. Other key national priorities, such as meeting high educational standards in our public schools and helping welfare recipients move toward economic self-sufficiency, also depend in critical ways on expanding opportunities for individuals with limited English skills and helping them gain the skills they need to get ahead economically and socially.

In this paper, we describe the demographics and economic circumstances of low-income adults with limited English proficiency (LEP) as well as the language and job training services available to them. We summarize lessons from scientific evaluation research on employment programs for low-skilled adults and provide recommendations for policy and practice that would increase opportunities for LEP adults to gain access to higher-paying jobs. Finally, we profile several programs that illustrate some of these promising practices.

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Adults with Limited English Skills: Who Are They and How Are They Faring?

Adults in the United States with limited English skills are a diverse group. Most are immigrants representing a wide range of countries and cultural backgrounds, including some who are highly educated. Many of those with limited English skills, however, have low levels of literacy and formal education in their native languages as well. This section provides information on the size of the limited English proficient population, their education and skills levels, and their labor market prospects.

- **More than eight million working-age adults in the United States—5 percent of all adults—do not speak English well or at all.**

The 2000 Census found that among adults who speak a language other than English at home, 2.6 million do not speak English at all. An additional 5.7 million do not speak English well, adding up to 8.3 million adults—nearly 5 percent of the adult population—who speak English poorly.[3] Beyond this, another (7.2 million) have some English verbal skills, but still do not speak English very well. The majority of these 15.5 million adults would likely be classified as having limited English proficiency. (See Figure 1.)

Because there is little direct information available about LEP individuals, however, in this paper we generally use the foreign-born or immigrant population as a proxy for those with limited English skills.[4] The immigrant population in the U.S. is over 32 million, making up over 11 percent of the country.[5] (See Box 1.) The share of the adult population that does not speak English well is greater in states and cities with larger numbers of immigrants. In Los Angeles and New York City (whose metropolitan areas are home to one-third of all immigrants in the U.S.[6]), large majorities (from two-thirds to three-quarters) of immigrant adults do not speak English well.[7] The 2000 Census found a number of states where particularly large shares of the adult population have limited English skills, including California (12 percent), Texas (8 percent), Arizona (7 percent), New York (7 percent), and Nevada (7 percent).

- **Adults with limited English skills represent a growing and critical segment of the U.S. workforce.**

Half of the growth in our workforce during the 1990s was due to immigration. By contrast, in the 1980s, immigrants accounted for just one-fourth of workforce growth and, in the 1970s, just 10 percent.[8] (See Figure 2.) Further, over the next two decades, the percentage of American workers whose English is limited will keep increasing due to continued growth in immigration and to the aging of the native-born workforce. Immigrants are projected to account for *all* of the net growth in the 25- to 54-year-old workforce during this time period.[9]

- **Many immigrants have arrived recently, as more people came to the U.S. in the 1990s than in any other decade in our history. Recently arrived immigrants are settling in different states than earlier immigrants, creating new workforce opportunities and challenges.**

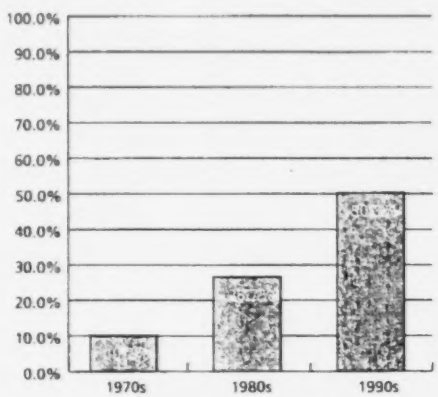
The Census estimates that over 13 million legal immigrants arrived between 1990 and 2000, with about 58 percent arriving between 1995 and 2000.[10] New arrivals are particularly diverse and are increasingly likely to come from countries where English is not the primary language. In recent years, the most common country of origin has been Mexico, but substantial shares also come from India, the Philippines, China, Vietnam, the Caribbean, and European countries (including the former Soviet Union). (See Figure 3.)

Overall, immigrants are still concentrated in six states that have traditionally been home to many immigrants. California, New York, Texas, Florida, Illinois, and New Jersey are home to about 70 percent of all immigrants, with at least one million (and often several million) immigrants living in each state.[11] Immigrants also remain concentrated in cities—95 percent of immigrants live in metropolitan areas—and in New York and Los Angeles in particular,

Figure 1. Number of 18- to 54-Year-Olds Who Do Not Speak English at Home
(By Level of English Skills)

CLASP calculations from U.S. Census Bureau. (2002). Retrieved from tables produced at http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DatasetMainPageServlet?_lang=en on September 25, 2002. Figures include the District of Columbia, but not Puerto Rico or other territories.

Figure 2. Share of Workforce Growth Due to Immigration in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s



Sum, A., Fogg, N., Harrington, P. with Khatiwada, I., Trubb'sky, M., and Palma, S. (2002, August). *Immigrant workers and the great American job machine: The contributions of new foreign immigration to national and regional labor force growth in the 1990s.* Boston, MA: Northeastern University.

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where close to one-third of the country's immigrants live.[12] These states and cities need targeted programs of a substantial scope if they are to help large numbers of immigrants integrate.

On the other hand, it appears that new immigrants are increasingly choosing new places to live. In the U.S. as a whole, about one-quarter of all immigrants in 2000 had arrived recently (since 1995 or later), but in several states—Iowa, Georgia, Kentucky, and North Carolina—close to 40 percent of all immigrants had arrived recently. A 2001 study identified 19 states that did not traditionally receive large numbers of immigrants, but have seen their immigrant populations grow faster than the rest of the country. Between 1990 and 1999, Arkansas, Idaho, Minnesota, Nevada, and North Carolina saw their immigrant populations rise by over 150 percent.[13] In addition, many localities in some states, such as Virginia and Tennessee, saw exceptionally high growth in immigration in the 1990s.[14]

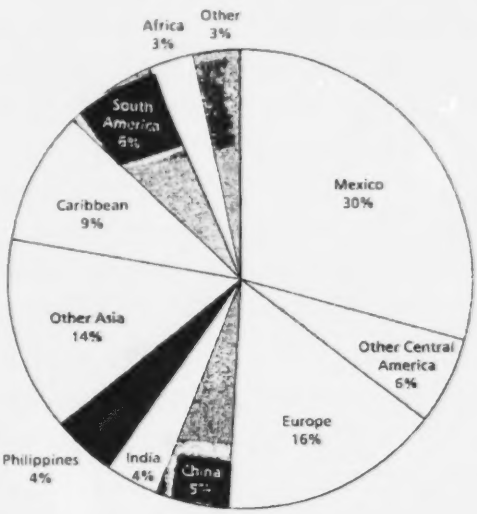
Regions with a growing population of immigrants face both workforce opportunities and service challenges. To tap into this new labor force, employers must be prepared to work with employees with limited English skills. Demand for certain types of services—particularly English language and job training services for individuals unfamiliar with the U.S. workplace—will also increase.

- **Recent arrivals tend to have lower English skills than other immigrants. Their limited English skills affect their ability to find work and earn enough to support their families.**

The 1990 Census showed that almost half of the immigrants who had arrived within the previous three years did not speak English, compared with one-quarter of all foreign-born residents.[15] Simply remaining in the U.S. helps many immigrants improve their English language ability, although without formal instruction it is not clear what fluency level they achieve or whether they will be able to increase their literacy levels sufficiently to access higher wage jobs.

Spoken English appears to be an important component of economic stability and success in the U.S. Although few studies have collected employment rates for immigrants according to English ability, those that have show a strong connection. For example, the 1999 Refugee Survey shows that only 26 percent of refugees who did not speak English were employed, compared with 77 percent of those who spoke English well or fluently.[16] A review of Los Angeles's welfare-to-work program found that employment rates for Hispanic and Asian participants proficient in English were 10 to nearly 30 percentage points higher than employment rates for Hispanic and Asian participants who did not speak English well.[17]

Figure 3. Country or Region of Origin for the Foreign-Born Population, 2000



Source: CLASP calculations from U.S. Census Bureau. (2002). Table PCT027. Place of birth for the foreign-born population. Census Supplementary Survey 2001. Retrieved from http://factfinder.census.gov, on July 18, 2003.

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Box 1. Who Are Immigrants in the United States?

The foreign-born population is composed of three groups, which are described below. It is important to keep in mind that most immigrant families (that is, families with a foreign-born head-of-household) include members with a variety of immigration statuses. The Urban Institute has found, for example, that 85 percent of families with at least one noncitizen parent include a child who is a U.S. citizen. In fact, nearly 10 percent of all families with children in the U.S. include a noncitizen parent and a citizen child.[18]

Legal immigrants. This is by far the largest group—the Census estimates the number of legal immigrants at over 21 million.[19] Legal immigrants come to the U.S. through a variety of channels, most commonly as relatives of other legal immigrants or citizens (close to two-thirds in recent years). The remainder are most likely to enter as employees (having been recruited by businesses) or as winners of the Diversity Visa lottery.[20] Legal immigrants are eligible to become naturalized U.S. citizens after three or five years of permanent residence, depending on their circumstances. As of 1997, the Census Bureau estimated that 35 percent of the foreign-born population had naturalized.[21]

Refugees. Refugees are legal immigrants who arrive in the U.S. under special circumstances. Typically they have left their home country under duress, often after suffering personal and material hardships.[22] They are the only group of immigrants who arrive to an established, government-funded resettlement program, which guarantees them assistance, including English classes linked to employment services, for at least four to eight months after arrival. Refugees are also the smallest category of immigrants: from 1990 to 2000, less than one million refugees entered the U.S.; thus, refugees make up only about 7 percent of all immigrant households.[23] However, refugees are even less likely than other immigrants to speak English—only 8 percent reported speaking English well at the time of arrival in the U.S.[24] Applications to enter the U.S. as a refugee have been scrutinized even more closely after the terrorist attacks on the U.S. in September 2001, so fewer refugees are entering the country than previously. Refugees are eligible to become naturalized citizens after residing in the U.S. for five years.

Undocumented immigrants. Undocumented immigrants are made up of two groups: those who entered the country without inspection and have remained here without adjusting to a legal status, and those who entered the country legally on a temporary visa (such as a tourist or student visa) and who overstayed the deadline of their visas.[25] Undocumented immigrants are typically not eligible for most publicly funded services. It is very difficult to find accurate information on the undocumented population, because, for the most part, members of the population are reluctant to divulge much about their circumstances.[26]

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The effect of learning English on immigrant workers' earnings is well-documented. For example, one review concluded that English fluency has roughly the same impact on immigrants' earnings as postsecondary education has on women's annual earnings—an increase of 17 percent, far more than increases attributed to additional years of work experience.[27] According to the 1992 National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), the average annual earnings for immigrants who did not speak English were only $10,441—less than half the average annual earnings for native-born workers.[28] Similarly, a recent analysis of 1990 Census data found that, controlling for other characteristics, immigrants who are fluent in English earn about 14 percent more than those who are not.[29] Another study found that when immigrants first arrive they earn less than natives, but that improvements in English language ability help narrow the earnings gap by 6 to 18 percent.[30]

- **Beyond their limited fluency in spoken English, immigrants often lack education credentials and written English skills critical to advancement in the labor market.**

Among foreign-born adults (age 25 and over), one-third lack a high school education—a proportion more than twice as high as among native-born adults. At the same time, however, roughly one-quarter of the foreign-born have a bachelor's degree or higher.[31] Thus, while lack of education is clearly an issue for many, the population does include some highly educated individuals who face English language barriers.

Not surprisingly, studies have also shown that immigrants have lower English literacy rates compared to natives, probably an outcome both of less schooling and a lack of English skills. According to the NALS, approximately 25 percent of the 40 million adults who possessed the lowest levels of literacy proficiency were immigrants.[32] Given that this assessment was only administered in English in the U.S., it is likely that these low scores indicate both a lower literacy rate (unsurprising given the lower educational levels of many immigrants) as well as a lack of fluency in English.

Lack of educational credentials likely limits the earnings potential of LEP adults, since workers without a college degree have had fewer opportunities in recent decades for wage increases than those with a degree.[33] For example, between 1981 and 2001, average real hourly wages for workers with less than a high school education fell from $11.02 to $9.50.[34] Other studies find that low-skilled workers see only very modest wage growth over time.[35]

- **Reflecting their low English literacy skills and limited credentials, immigrants are concentrated in low-wage work and many live in poverty.**

Immigrants are disproportionately concentrated in low-wage jobs. Nearly one-quarter of the workers in low-income families with children are immigrants, and about half of those immigrant families have arrived recently.[36] Looking at occupational profiles, 19 percent of all immigrants and 22 percent of recent immigrants hold service jobs, compared with 13 percent of native workers.[37] The wages of immigrants have also fallen in relation to wages earned by native workers. During the economic boom of the late 1990s, immigrants' unemployment rates fell faster than natives', but their wages grew much more slowly. For instance, between 1996 and 1999, real median hourly wages for white natives had risen from $11.50 to $12.31, while median wages for immigrants rose from $9.47 to $9.62.[38]

Low wages add up to low earnings, even among full-time, year-round workers. In 2000, 45 percent of male immigrants working full-time, year-round earned less than $25,000 per year, as compared to less than one-quarter of comparable native workers. Earnings are lowest among the most recent immigrants, who are the least likely to speak English: 57 percent of recent male immigrants working

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full-time, year-round earn less than $25,000 annually.[39] More generally, low wages and very modest wage growth mean that lower-skilled workers' earnings rise primarily as a result of working more hours. Earnings growth for low-skilled workers who stay on the job for a long time is only a few hundred dollars per year—not enough to move a family out of poverty.[40]

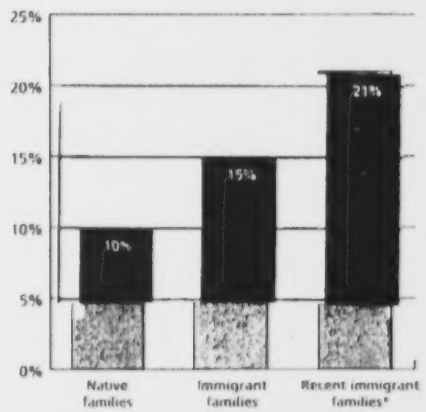
Low earnings, combined with demographic characteristics such as large households, mean that immigrant families are more likely to be poor. Households headed by immigrants tend to be larger than natives' households, partly because the immigrants are more likely to be married and have children. This means that an immigrant worker's income often has to stretch to cover more people, even though immigrants often earn less. As shown in Figure 4, in 1999, the poverty rate of families headed by immigrants was significantly higher than that of native families (15 percent versus 10 percent); families headed by *recent* immigrants (those who arrived in 1995 or later) were more than twice as likely to be poor (21 percent) as natives.[41] A study of immigrant families in Los Angeles and New York City found that they were generally poorer than native families in those cities and that LEP immigrant families were much poorer than immigrant families who spoke English well.[42]

- **Welfare reform eliminated some supports for immigrants, which may have worsened their economic condition.**

The overhaul of the welfare system in 1996 (which created the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families [TANF] program), together with a major immigration bill the same year, substantially changed which forms of assistance immigrants were eligible to receive and gave states significant discretion in deciding who should receive assistance.[43] Low-income immigrants are less likely to receive cash assistance through the TANF program than comparably poor native families. In 1999, three years after welfare reform, 12 percent of low-income citizen families with children received cash assistance, compared to 9 percent of low-income immigrant families with children.[44] The decline in the receipt of cash assistance since welfare reform has been steeper for immigrants than natives, which some researchers have attributed to immigrants' increased employment during the economic expansion of the mid-to-late 1990s.[45]

It is very difficult to isolate the effects of welfare reform on immigrant families who are now ineligible for public assistance, because few studies collected data on the same families before and after welfare reform. A number of studies do suggest that immigrant families, especially those who arrived after the law was enacted in 1996 and who are therefore least likely to be eligible for assistance, have faced greater hardships since welfare reform, although it is unclear whether the increased hardship is due directly to the changed law. In 1999, one study found that children of immi-

Figure 4. Poverty Rate Among Native Families and Immigrant Families, 1999



* Arrived in 1995 or later.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. (Date unknown.) *Profile of the foreign-born population in the United States, 2000 (detailed tables for P23-206).* Retrieved from http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/foreign/ppl-145.html on September 23, 2002, Tables 19-2A & 19-2B.

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grants were more likely to be poor and more likely to suffer food insecurity than children of native parents. These hardships may be at least partially attributable to changes made in immigrants' eligibility for public assistance programs.[46] Another study found that immigrants were most likely to be adversely affected by the welfare reform legislation and experienced an increase in food insecurity after welfare reform took effect.[47] Similarly, the study of immigrants in Los Angeles and New York City found they were using benefits less and had needs in several program areas directly affected by welfare reform's immigrant eligibility restrictions, including food, housing, and health insurance.[48]

Can English Language and Job Training Services Make a Difference for Labor Market Success?[49]

Adults with limited English skills clearly need to improve their English language abilities and acquire specific job skills if they are to advance in the labor market. Unfortunately, little scientific research has been conducted on the most effective ways to deliver English language, literacy, and job training services to this population; a key recommendation of this paper is to increase federal funding for such research. At the moment, though, the best available data come from the extensive scientific research conducted on employment programs for other groups of low-skilled individuals, principally those receiving cash assistance or welfare—a group that includes immigrants and refugees with limited English skills as well as native-born Americans.

Because of similarities in the employment services generally provided to welfare recipients and immigrants, research on these welfare-to-work programs provides important lessons on what works best for the LEP population. For example, individuals receiving welfare payments are generally required to participate in employment-related activities as a condition of receiving assistance. While the specific activities can vary, job search and basic education—which includes GED preparation programs, adult basic education (ABE) programs for those below an eighth grade level, and English as a second language (ESL) programs—have been among the most common. These services are very similar to the job search and English language skill services typically provided to immigrants with low skills. However, the results from welfare-to-work evaluations are most applicable to LEP individuals who have low literacy and job skill levels, rather than those who are more highly educated in their native languages.

- **Two scientific evaluations of a training program serving primarily Hispanic immigrants found that integrating job training with English language, literacy, and math instruction increased employment and earnings.**

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Among scientific studies of employment programs, the random assignment evaluations of the Center for Employment and Training (CET) program in San Jose, California, are most relevant to the LEP population because most of CET's participants were Hispanic and many had limited English skills.[50] In one multi-site evaluation that focused on low-income female single parents, CET was the strongest program by far. Participants at CET increased their earnings by 45 percent more than the control group over a two-and-a-half year follow-up period, primarily due to finding jobs with higher hourly wages and working more hours. In addition, overall earnings gains persisted through five years of follow-up, even though a substantial portion of the control group received services during this time through the state's welfare-to-work program.[51] In another multi-site evaluation that focused on young high school dropouts, CET was again the best performer and increased earnings by 26 percent over four years.[52]

At CET, which was evaluated in the early 1990s, individuals entered job training immediately (regardless of their educational levels). English language, literacy, and math instruction was, for the most part, integrated directly into training for a specific job. Participants were not considered to have completed the program until placed in employment. Training was provided full-time, in a work-like environment with participants generally completing the training in six or seven months. Staff had extensive knowledge of the local labor market that they used to determine which technical skills would be taught in the program and to help place students after training was completed. In addition, CET was accredited so that its students could receive Pell Grants, a key factor in the program's ability to provide a substantial number of hours of instruction, hire full-time instructors from industry, and provide an array of supports. (See Appendix for a detailed description of the program.) In the evaluation of single parents noted above, the CET approach was very different from the other sites in the evaluation (and produced much larger impacts). The other sites provided more traditional and sequential services in which women generally were placed initially in basic education and entered job skill training only after they attained certain academic skills. One caveat to CET's generally strong results, however, is that the initially positive effects for those who entered the program without a high school diploma faded after five years, suggesting a need for ongoing access to English language and literacy services after completion of a short-term training program.

- **In general, the most effective programs for moving low-income individuals into work provide a mix of services, including job search, education, and job training.**[53]

Beyond CET, other research has also shown that providing education and training within a program strongly focused on employment is a successful strategy. (LEP individuals participated in these other programs to varying degrees, but were not as high a share of participants as they were in CET.) The largest of these evaluations—the National Evaluation of Welfare-to-Work Strategies (NEWWS)—studied 11 programs in the mid-to-late 1990s using a random assignment research design.[54] One of the sites in the NEWWS evaluation—Portland, Oregon—produced impacts that are among the largest ever seen in welfare-to-work programs. The program resulted in a 21 percent increase in employment and a 25 percent increase in earnings compared to control group members.[55] These impacts far surpassed the other NEWWS sites as well as results from most other evaluations for both high school graduates and nongraduates. The Portland program also resulted in the largest improvements in job quality as of the two-year follow-up point—program enrollees experienced a 13 percent increase in hourly wages and a 19 percent increase in jobs with employer-provided health insurance—and was one of only four sites in NEWWS that had impacts in this area.[56]

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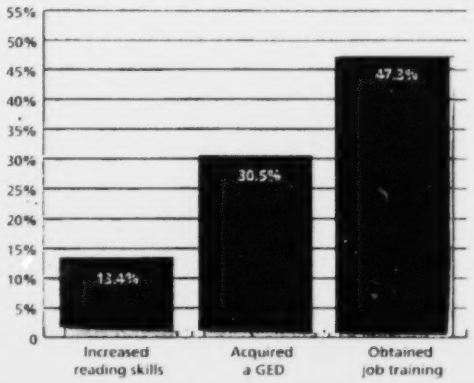
The successful program in Portland emphasized participation in a range of activities, tailored services to individual needs, and stressed job quality. Portland substantially increased participation in education and training programs—particularly job training and other postsecondary education—while maintaining an employment focus. Those who were most work-ready received help in finding "good" jobs right away—ones that paid more than minimum wage, had benefits, and were full-time—while those with less education and work experience typically participated in life skills, education and training, and job search activities.[57] Overall, the program was very balanced in its use of job search and education and training. In addition, job search participants in Portland were counseled to wait for a good job, as opposed to taking the first job offered.[58]

- **The "mixed services" programs performed better than programs in which the primary program activity was job search or those in which basic education was strongly emphasized.**

Programs with a "mixed strategy" (such as Portland and CET) that include education and training as well as job search have consistently outperformed programs focused almost exclusively on immediate employment, which primarily provide job search assistance. The recent NEWWS evaluation included several sites that focused primarily on job search and, unlike the Portland program, did not vary the initial activity according to participants' needs. These job search-focused programs increased employment and earnings and reduced welfare payments, as shown in Figure 5, but by substantially less than the program in Portland.[59] Another striking difference between Portland and the other job search-focused programs in the NEWWS evaluation is that this site continued to produce unusually large earnings impacts in the fourth and fifth years of follow-up, while impacts in most of the job search-focused sites in the NEWWS evaluation diminished after three or four years.[60]

Figure 5. Average Increase in Earnings Over Five Years for Three Welfare-to-Work Strategies



Source: Hamilton, G., Freedman, S., Gennetian, L., Michalopoulos, C., Walter, J., Adams-Ciardullo, D., et al. (2001). *How effective are different welfare-to-work approaches? Five year adult and child impacts for eleven programs.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Education.

The "mixed services" programs also performed better than programs that primarily provided basic education, such as "stand-alone" ABE or ESL classes.[61] A review of evaluations of these programs indicates that the earnings gains have been limited, with few performing better than mixed service or job search-focused interventions.[62] In addition, the basic education-focused programs did not improve job quality and were more expensive to operate.[63] These programs also have not consistently increased basic skills test scores or attainment of the GED,[64] although programs that pay close attention to the quality of services can produce better results.[65]

- **Job training and other postsecondary programs can substantially increase earnings and job quality.**

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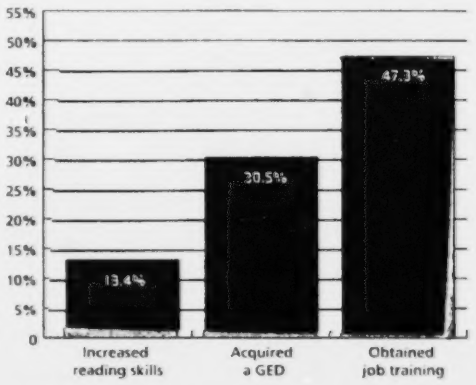
There is a growing body of evidence pointing to the importance of both job training and other postsecondary education in producing earnings gains and improving job quality, particularly for welfare recipients. Even those with lower skills can benefit if basic education—including ESL classes—is closely linked to further skill upgrading. The mixed strategy program in Portland, which dramatically increased earnings and job quality, increased the proportion of nongraduates who obtained a high school diploma or GED *and* a second education or training credential (usually a trade license or certificate)—a result no other evaluated program has achieved.[66]

The NEWWS evaluation also suggested significant economic returns to job training for those without a high school diploma.[67] This non-experimental research found that, for individuals without a high school diploma, participation in basic education resulted in substantially larger increases in longer term earnings if these individuals subsequently participated in job training. Those who participated in basic education and then went on to participate in job training or other postsecondary education had an additional $1,542 (or 47 percent) in earnings in the third year of follow-up compared to those who participated only in basic education.[68] (See Figure 6.) While the payoff is significant, it can take a substantial amount of time to complete both basic education and job training—more than a year on average.[69]

While some programs that have successfully encouraged participation in job training and other postsecondary education have generated positive results, an ongoing issue has been that

Figure 6. Increase in Earnings for Adult Education Participants in Welfare-to-Work Programs, by Educational Outcome



Source: Bos, J., Scrivener, S., Snipes, J., & Hamilton, G. (2001). *Improving basic skills: The effects of adult education in welfare-to-work programs.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Education.

few individuals without high school diplomas gain access to these activities. For example, in the three NEWWS evaluation sites that produced large earnings gains from job training (this substudy did not include Portland), only 15 percent of those who participated in basic education went on to training.[70] Low levels of participation appear to stem from several factors, including ineffective linkages between basic education and training, training programs that are not open to high school dropouts or people with very low literacy or limited English skills, and job search-oriented programs that discourage extended participation in education and training.

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Creating Quality Job Training Programs for Adults with Limited English Skills

A national, bipartisan task force recently concluded that how we respond as a nation to the large and growing presence of immigrants in the U.S. and their critical role in meeting our workforce needs will be key for determining both our future economic growth and how well prosperity is shared among workers.[71] Yet most current education and training programs do not have the capacity to meet the needs of job seekers and workers who speak little English, have had few years of schooling, and may or may not be literate in their native language. (See Box 2.) In general, programs serving adult immigrants are severely underfunded relative to the need; English language services and job training are typically not linked; and rarely do programs provide the mix of ESL, literacy, job training, and employment services found to be effective in the research described in the previous section.

In this section, we provide recommendations for creating high-quality education and training services for adults with limited proficiency in English. Because scientific research on such services is so limited, only a few of these recommendations are drawn from scientific evaluations. Most of these recommendations are drawn from other, non-experimental research in the fields of adult ESL and training and from site visits and interviews with practitioners at promising ESL programs (see Appendix for profiles of these programs).[72] We first discuss ways to improve program design and operations and then suggest steps national and state policymakers can take to expand and support effective services for this population.

Recommendations for Program Design and Operations

Conventional English language and job training approaches generally do not seem to have worked well for adults with limited English skills who are seeking to improve their long-term job prospects. To change this, new specialized programs for adults with limited English must be created and existing programs should be adapted to the needs of LEP individuals. These recommendations are perhaps most useful for state and local program administrators involved in program design and curriculum development for LEP students, although instructors can benefit as well.

Box 2. Existing Federally Supported Employment, Education, and Training Services for Immigrants

Adults with limited English skills face a dauntingly complex and fragmented array of education and training services. In particular, responsibility for employment, English language, and job training services is typically divided between education and labor agencies at the federal, state, and county levels, making it difficult to create programs that combine the three services and for individuals to link the services on their own. Funding for both English language and job training services is also quite low relative to the need.

Title I of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), administered by the U.S. Department of Labor, provides localities with resources to operate "one-stop centers," which offer universal job search services and access to education and training. Low-income adults, welfare recipients, and laid-off workers have priority for job training, although the number of individuals receiving training has fallen by three-quarters compared with the previous program WIA replaced.[73] Enacted in 1998, WIA provided about $2.5 billion in federal dollars for services to adults in 2000, with approximately 83,000 individuals receiving job training during this time. Despite their over-representation in the low-skilled workforce, immigrants tend to be under-represented in this program, perhaps because of language barriers. In 2000, only 7 percent of all adults receiving services through WIA had limited English proficiency (about 11,000 individuals). Of this group, about 12 percent participated in adult education or literacy activities and over half participated in skills training.[74]

Title II of the Workforce Investment Act (also known as the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) is the primary federal funding source for English language services, GED preparation, and other basic education services for adults who lack a high school diploma or functional basic literacy skills. About $491 million flow annually from the U.S. Department of Education to states in basic funding for these services, with an additional $70 million provided for English language and civics education.[75] The services are most commonly provided through local K-12 public school districts, though in some cases community colleges and private, non-profit groups operate them. English language services are the fastest growing component of Title II, with participants accounting for 41 percent of all adult education students in 2000, though most are concentrated in a few states.[76] Nationally, the 1.1 million adults in Title II ESL classes in 2000 represent about 13 percent of adults who reported speaking English not well or not at all on the 2000 Census. Most ESL services are not focused on employment and do not include job-specific training.

The Refugee Resettlement Program at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services funds voluntary agencies and state resettlement offices to provide ESL and job readiness services to newly arrived refugees, who are mandated to attend classes as part of their resettlement. In FY 2000, Congress appropriated $426 million to assist refugees, of which about 40 percent

continued...

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Box 2 Continued...

went to direct cash and medical assistance for over 90,000 arrivals during the year.[77] Despite the opportunity to provide English language training, only about one-fifth of the refugees surveyed in 2000 by the Office of Refugee Resettlement reported receiving ESL services outside of high school in the previous 12 months. Encouragingly, more recent arrivals were more likely to be served—over half of this group reported having received English language training outside of high school in the past year.[78] Fewer than 10 percent of refugees had received job training during this period, however.[79]

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant provides $16.5 billion to states annually for cash assistance, employment and training programs, and other services to low-income families. Since the passage of welfare reform in 1996, immigrants' ability to access TANF services has varied considerably from state to state. TANF funds may be used to pay for ESL classes for low-income adults (even if they are not receiving cash assistance), but it does not appear that most states have used the funds for this purpose because most welfare-to-work programs emphasize job search activities and quick entry into the labor market.[80] In FY 2001, less than 2 percent of federal and state TANF funds were spent on education and training[81] and only 5 percent of TANF recipients participated in these activities in the same year.[82] (These figures include education and training for all participants, not just those with limited English skills.) Time limits on cash assistance may also curtail the use of these funds to assist limited English speakers: preliminary evidence suggests that LEP recipients are reaching their lifetime limits on receipt of TANF assistance at higher rates than other recipients. For example, a study in five California counties found that a majority of those reaching the lifetime limit on assistance did not speak English as a primary language.[83]

The Higher Education Act (HEA) funds federal student financial aid programs. In FY 2003, about $10.9 billion was appropriated for the Pell Grant program, which provides up to $4,000 per year to low-income individuals enrolled in eligible programs at postsecondary institutions. Many of these individuals are enrolled in occupational certificate or associate degree programs at community colleges and for-profit trade schools. Legal immigrants may apply for Pell grants, but if they do not have a high school diploma or GED, they must pass an "ability to benefit" test to demonstrate they have the skills to succeed in a program. In addition, they must typically pass English language proficiency tests.

- **Create programs that combine language and literacy services with job skills training.**

As discussed earlier, research shows that linking basic skills education with job training results in higher earnings gains for participants in the long run than focusing on basic skills alone. To make this approach work for immigrants who speak little English, language instruction should be tied to training in particular occupations and should incorporate key instructional elements, including general workplace communication skills, job-specific language needed for training, certification and

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testing, and soft skills to help navigate U.S. workplace culture. Employability skills, such as goal setting, finding a match between personal preferences and available jobs, job search and applications, as well as strategies for handling a job interview, should be included as well. (See Box 3.)

Approaches that combine language education with skills training show a great deal of promise for immigrants and refugees eager to join the workforce. They offer a number of benefits: (1) participants gain important job skills while developing the communication skills needed to obtain jobs, (2) the language and cultural skills needed for job search and job retention are more easily integrated into training, (3) learning is both focused and contextualized and therefore more easily absorbed by participants who have little experience with formal schooling, and (4) motivation to learn remains high as participants see a clear end goal.

Combined language and job training models come in various forms and may include any of the following: Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) plus training in specific job skills; hands-on skills training plus ESL support; or bilingual vocational training where the native language is used to teach job-specific skills and English is used to teach job-related language skills (see examples below for more detail). Another integral part of quality models is the employment services that help immigrants navigate the job search systems and assist in job placement and retention.

This approach, however, is not a quick fix. Learning specific job skills and acquiring proficiency in English will take many months—nine to 18 months is typical for those who speak little English. Those who speak no English and have very limited literacy skills both in English and in the native language will greatly benefit from ongoing participation in ESL classes.

In some cases, tailoring language services to specific occupations may not be feasible and other models may need to be considered. For example, many general ESL classes include working adults who hold a variety of jobs, and for them, training in one specific area is not practical. In addition, workers are generally only able to attend courses part time; therefore, full-time courses that focus on job-specific training are not an option for them. In these instances, programs might offer a series of evening workshops or Saturday classes especially designed for working immigrants. These courses can emphasize the skills common to a cluster of jobs (e.g., in manufacturing or in the service industry), or they can teach the language and vocabulary needed in demand positions, such as health, transportation, or construction, for those wanting to retrain for better-paying jobs. Another option would be to introduce general employment-related communication, problem solving, and other essential skills useful in any number of jobs. Holding ESL classes at a worksite in collaboration with employers or unions can also be an effective way of reaching working adults. Finally, models that help workers take advantage of entrepreneurship opportunities by teaching them how to access small business loans, write bids for jobs, and learn simple accounting allow for income possibilities outside of standard jobs.

- **Adapt existing education and training programs not specifically geared toward individuals with limited English skills to be more responsive to their needs.**

In many areas, education and training programs originally designed for native speakers of English increasingly find themselves serving immigrant participants who speak only marginal English and who often have had little formal education in their native language. In order to serve this new population well, several adjustments may need to be made. For example, most conventional job skills training programs require high levels of English proficiency. Quite often, the training is based on

Box 3. Language Skills Needed for Employment and Training

General workplace communication skills. Learning job-specific terminology is a necessary part of job preparation, but it is hardly sufficient for job success. Teaching the vocabulary and the oral fluency skills necessary to communicate effectively with peers, supervisors, and managers at work is equally critical. In cases where individuals interact with the public, workplace communication skills become especially important since differences in intonation can easily make or break a service encounter (as when an employee says "May I help you?" in a tone that signals annoyance). Effective ways of teaching workplace communication skills include discussing differences between work in the U.S. and the home country, learning what to say when you do not understand, learning to give explanations and to speak up, and finding out what you can do when you are not being treated fairly.[84] Participants may also need practice on how to share information about themselves and their families with co-workers so they can fit in socially at work.

Job-specific language for training and testing. Immigrants preparing to enter the workplace face a formidable task: they must acquire language specific to particular jobs or job clusters, along with the general communication skills necessary to navigate an English-speaking environment. In addition, they must acquire the background knowledge necessary to pass job entry tests, demonstrate necessary competencies (in safety, for example), or meet job certification requirements.[85] Participants are well-served by programs that conduct a needs analysis with students to determine past experiences, present circumstances, and future goals—and then link this information with a "job audit" that outlines the language and literacy requirements of a particular job. Information from these needs analyses can then form the basis of a curriculum that teaches language, literacy, and culture in the context of work in ways that are appropriate for various groups of learners.

Soft skills related to navigating workplace culture. Soft skills include not only the skills associated with high-performance jobs (e.g., planning, decision-making, group interactions), but also strategies for navigating the U.S. workplace, understanding how things work, getting along with co-workers, and dealing with diversity. Workplace simulations and scenarios depicting "sticky situations" are particularly effective in helping newcomers understand workplace cultures and finding ways of fitting in without giving up too much of one's identify or being taken advantage of. Role plays in particular can uncover how different individuals interpret situations such as being asked to contribute to multiple baby showers during a few months' time or having to deal with more serious issues such as sexual harassment. Besides offering opportunities for understanding cultural differences, scenarios and role plays are ideal for the development of both language and social interaction skills.

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lectures and textbooks that require advanced language skills. In many cases, the English requirements for performing on the job are much less than those demanded for admission into a training program, keeping the language threshold artificially high. In addition, evidence of learning is often measured through pencil and paper multiple-choice tests,[86] a format that is extremely difficult to negotiate for those with weak literacy and few years of schooling, even for those who have many years of work experience. The following suggestions for training providers are intended to make their programs more accessible to LEP adults and supportive of their success. These suggestions apply equally whether a new program is being created or existing ones adapted:

- ***Use assessments appropriate for measuring language proficiency, not just basic skills.*** Select assessments that provide information on at least two dimensions of language proficiency: oral fluency (the ability to communicate face to face and over the phone) and literacy (the ability to deal with written information). If participants are only given a pencil and paper test, it is difficult to determine if their inability to complete the test is related to their not knowing any English or if it is indicative of their difficulties with reading and writing.

- ***Build on existing work experience and educational background.*** Advise participants who have professional expertise (e.g., attorneys, doctors, nurses, and dentists) about how they can obtain the appropriate licenses to work in their chosen field. Find out what degrees are recognized in the U.S. (a local university can usually provide this information) and what it takes for a professional to transition to higher education. Work with groups in the community who can tell you to what extent work titles are equivalent.[87]

- ***Hire bilingual staff.*** Well-trained, bilingual staff can provide a program with a full picture of participants' backgrounds and experiences related to employment. These staff can interview participants, conduct focus groups in the native language to find out about participants' issues and concerns, and otherwise run interference through bureaucratic systems. Insist on the same quality of service that you would for other staff, but pay special attention to the person's cross-cultural competence or the ability to work within and across different cultures, including the culture of your organization. If the staff person will do translations, ask another person to translate the information back to English for you to get a check on the quality of the translation to ensure the accuracy of the information and prevent embarrassment. Keep in mind that many of the participants from poorer countries (Latinos from rural areas in Mexico or Central America, the Hmong, more recent refugees from Western Africa) do not have strong literacy skills in the native language and often do not have the background knowledge to understand the written information being sent out. If you cannot hire your own bilingual staff person, link with ethnically focused community-based organizations or other agencies that have bilingual staff and can offer support services.

- ***Use hands-on training to make job training more accessible.*** A way to make training work for LEP participants is through the use of hands-on learning that focuses on tasks and

projects to be completed. This approach, sometimes referred to as "action learning" or "situated learning" allows participants to learn by doing. Information is presented primarily through demonstrations and hands-on work, rather than through lectures and manuals. In the end, the approach is particularly effective with LEP participants with few years of schooling for whom conventional classroom-based learning presents a struggle. Hands-on learning allows these workers to acquire English communication and other basic skills on an as-needed basis as they directly engage work processes. English support classes that focus on the language used when working with tools and machines reinforce key concepts and help participants internalize the language skills they have learned. The Center for Employment Training (discussed in the previous section and the Appendix) has been highly successful in the use of this approach for many years.[88] (See Box 4.)

- **Offer short-term bridge programs that transition participants to job training and higher education more quickly.**

Currently, LEP adults must typically follow a sequential path through education and training that starts with participation in a general English language program, which includes several levels (often as many as seven, from beginning to advanced), moves to the acquisition of a GED, and then offers possible participation in a job training program or higher education. For most adults with little English and few resources, this path takes much too long. A substantial number of those who start at the beginning levels of ESL drop out long before they acquire the proficiency necessary to enter conventional training or other post-secondary education programs.

There is a tremendous need for programs that "bridge" the gap quickly between the skills LEP adults enter with and the skills necessary to succeed in a particular training or higher education program. Bridge programs can introduce specific job skills, reading and math necessary for an occupation, and build job communication skills by increasing students'

Box 4. "Hands-On" Job Training

The MET program at El Paso Community College in Texas offers hands-on training in the construction trades by having participants build a house in the parking lot behind the training site. Participants, who vary in their English language skills from no proficiency in English to fairly bilingual in Spanish and English, attend classes and do the construction work required. The construction supervisor is a monolingual English speaker who gives directions and explains processes in English, providing authentic opportunities for participants to communicate in English and helping to build both the communicative competence and personal confidence of the workers. Skills such as measurement and blueprint reading are learned in the context of the work. Hands-on skills are acquired fairly easily, since what needs to be done is either evident or can be demonstrated. Throughout the course, proficiency in English is demonstrated through completion of classroom assignments and work tasks equivalent to those undertaken on a regular construction site.

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listening comprehension and technical vocabulary—for example, by having students listen to mini-lectures on topics related to the future course of study (e.g., health or technology). Students new to U.S. classrooms may need to learn study skills as well, including strategies for exam preparation. Bridge programs are particularly effective when they are connected to a clearly defined career pathway of job and education opportunities. (See examples in Boxes 5 and 6.)

- **Create career pathways for adults with limited English skills.**

Because wage advancement is critical to long-term success in the labor market, staff should work with participants to shift their focus from "getting a job" to "planning for a career." This is not an easy proposition—particularly for the LEP population. Individuals need to be able to see, in very concrete terms, how they can move from an initial entry-level job along a pathway that eventually leads to a high-wage job. Setting a career pathway upfront provides a framework to align education and support services. A critical aspect of this effort is to identify the eight to 10, high-demand, growth occupations in a region and to work with employers and industry representatives to chart out potential job pathways and corresponding education and training opportunities.[89]

In developing career pathways, agencies and colleges generally have been much more successful in offering customized training geared towards the needs of the LEP population than they have been in preparing participants for pre-existing training programs not geared toward LEP participants. In some areas, such as Arlington, Virginia, and Boston, Massachusetts, adult schools have worked with community-based organizations and community colleges to provide a seamless, coherent path that moves LEP students from native language literacy and beginning levels of ESL to English language instruction and job training or employment. Such a system can also be an effective way to provide "stop out learners"—those who need to leave education to go to work—with opportunities to continue their schooling along a well-articulated pathway. Such models can easily incorporate "any time, any place" learning offered through a combination of tutors, distance education, and small group instruction at the workplace. "Exit and entry ramps" can be designed at various

Box 5. "Bridges" to Job Training and Higher Education

The Chicago Manufacturing Technology Bridge (CMTB) Program, operated by Instituto del Progreso Latino, provides an opportunity to pursue skills needed for employment in manufacturing—primarily in occupations that provide potential for growth and advancement—along with language and workplace skills in 16 weeks. Many of the classes for the CMTB program take place at a local community college and students earn college credits—which provides a bridge to further postsecondary education. In addition, the multiple opportunities to learn English in contextualized settings—through workplace communication classes focusing on vocational English and manufacturing-specific terminology, hands-on manufacturing workshops, and individual computer-based learning—allow for targeted English acquisition to prepare students to be proficient enough to enter and function in the workplace. Because the rapid acquisition of technical skills, English, and an understanding of workplace culture can be stressful, program participants have access to counseling, case management, and job placement assistance and retention follow-up.

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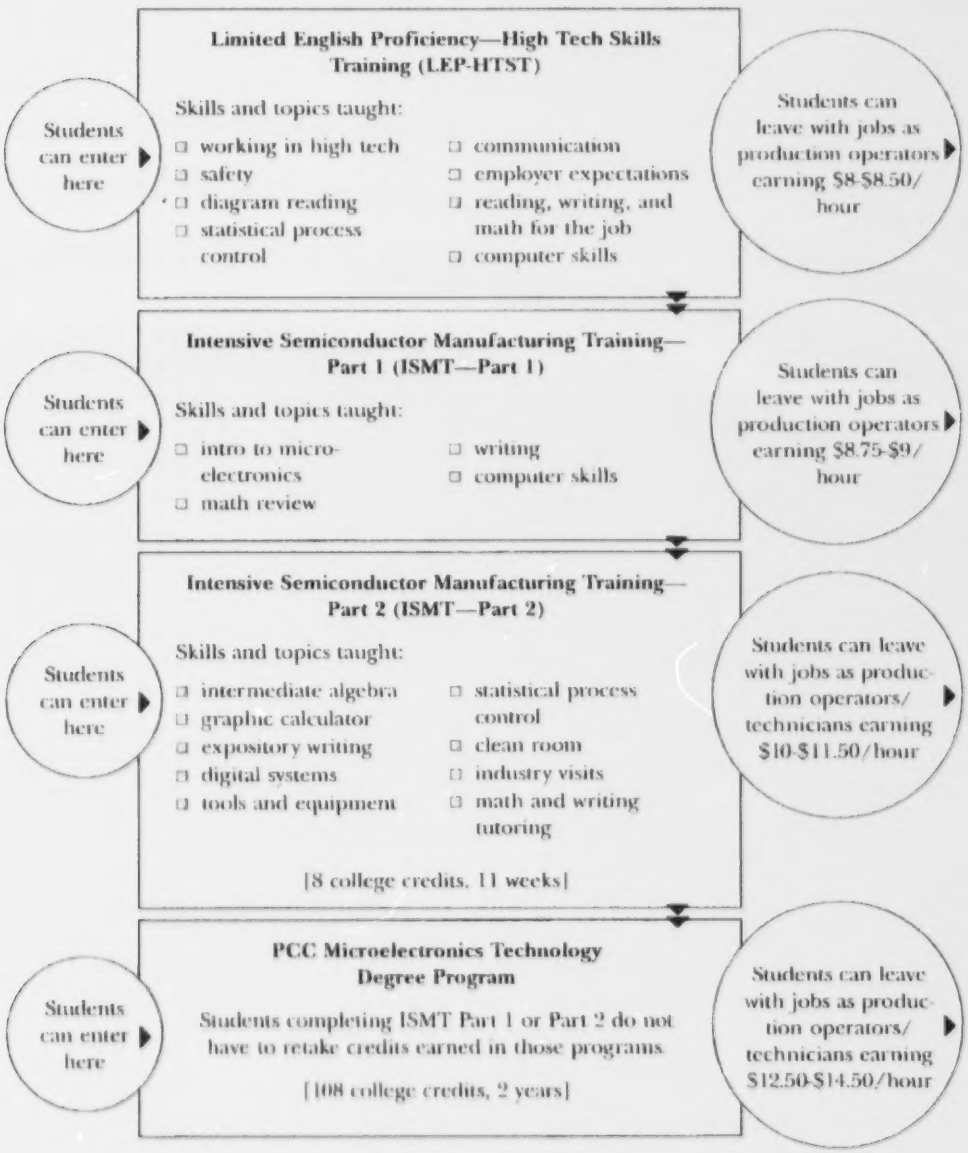
Box 6. Portland Community College High Tech Career Pathway[10]

This career pathway begins with a bridge program for LEP adults. Students enter different trainings based on their skill levels. Once students complete a training component, they can move to the next training, or they can obtain employment and pursue the next level of training later, or they can combine work and training.


Limited English Proficiency—High Tech Skills Training (LEP-HTST)
Students can enter here
Skills and topics taught:
working in high tech
safety
diagram reading
statistical process control
communication
employer expectations
reading, writing, and math for the job
computer skills
Students can leave with jobs as production operators earning $8-$8.50/hour
Intensive Semiconductor Manufacturing Training—Part 1 (ISMT—Part 1)
Students can enter here
Skills and topics taught:
intro to micro-electronics
math review
writing
computer skills
Students can leave with jobs as production operators earning $8.75-$9/hour
Intensive Semiconductor Manufacturing Training—Part 2 (ISMT—Part 2)
Students can enter here
Skills and topics taught:
intermediate algebra
graphic calculator
expository writing
digital systems
tools and equipment
statistical process control
clean room
industry visits
math and writing tutoring
[8 college credits, 11 weeks]
Students can leave with jobs as production operators/technicians earning $10-$11.50/hour
PCC Microelectronics Technology Degree Program
Students can enter here
Students completing ISMT Part 1 or Part 2 do not have to retake credits earned in those programs.
[108 college credits, 2 years]
Students can leave with jobs as production operators/technicians earning $12.50-$14.50/hour

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points in the system to allow learners to leave with a clear set of skills at designated points and return at a later time. (See Box 6.)

In several states, advocacy by local providers and immigrant rights groups has resulted in the establishment of "LEP pathways," particularly in job search-focused programs for welfare recipients. These are program modifications that allow individuals new to English with no job experience to bypass an initial job search and directly enter a training program that combines job preparation and English. In many cases, skills preparation is part of the mix as well. For example, the VIP program at San Francisco Community College combines vocational ESL, computer training, and job experience as part of an intensive six-week course.

- **Consider the merits of bilingual job training in areas where English is not necessary for job placement.**

In some areas in the United States—for example along the U.S.-Mexico border and in large ethnic enclaves in Chicago or Los Angeles—English proficiency is not necessarily a requirement for entry-level jobs. This is particularly true for jobs in the ethnic economy where immigrants work for other immigrants, although both advancement and lateral movement are often severely limited in these circumstances. In communities where two languages are commonly spoken, some service providers have started delivering job skills training in the native language concurrently with ESL classes. This model, sometimes referred to as bilingual-vocational training, has distinct advantages for adults who find learning English difficult. (See Box 7.) Older adults may benefit the most—particularly displaced workers who possess only marginal literacy in Spanish and speak little English, in spite of having worked for many years before job loss occurred.[91] At the Literacy Workforce Development Center at El Paso Community College, for example, a number of training programs use such an approach—bilingual training in child care, injection molding, and construction. Continued access to ESL services after the completion of the bilingual training program are important, however, to ensure that limited English skills do not hurt participants' advancement prospects later on.

Box 7. Bilingual Job Training

The Milwaukee Spanish Tech Track, run by the HIRE Center, is a fully bilingual training program in Computer Numerically Controlled Machining and Industrial Maintenance Mechanics. After detecting a shortage in the local labor market for these services, the HIRE Center developed a training program oriented toward higher paying jobs with career ladders in these fields for the primarily Spanish-speaking community in the area. For 16 weeks, students engage in a compressed manufacturing and technical training and graduate with knowledge of math, blueprint and schematic reading, and other skills, including electricity and electronics, basic hydraulics and pneumatics, power transmission, and welding. It is possible to attain needed skills in this relatively short amount of time because all classes are held in Spanish with translation of key terms in English. Although students attend an occupational ESL course concurrently with the technical training, math and other skills are taught in Spanish in order to facilitate quick learning (and also because it is not necessary to teach math in English). All course materials are provided in Spanish with English translations and all instructors are fully bilingual instructors, not interpreters.

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Box 8. Cultural Adjustment Issues as Part of Job Training

The mission of the Caregivers Job Training and Placement Program at the International Institute of the East Bay in Oakland, California, focuses on helping immigrant and refugee women adjust to life in the United States, as well as finding employment. To meet this goal, the curriculum emphasizes workplace communication, civic participation, and personal development, in addition to skills training and ESL classes. The program provides students with an informal support network for addressing adjustment problems and other areas of concern, as well as a forum to share their stories. Group work and role-playing are important elements of the teaching style that reinforce the supportive environment. Career and personal development and civic participation classes cover a wide range of topics including self-esteem, self-sufficiency, worker's rights, interviewing, resume writing, housing rights, navigating the social service delivery system, conflict resolution, and interpersonal communication.

- **Provide bilingual advising and job development responsive to the needs of foreign-born adults trying to adjust to the expectations of U.S. society.**

Successful programs often include support and advising conducted by bilingual individuals who are sensitive to cross-cultural issues, such as women being discouraged to take on work considered to be a "man's job" or families living in crisis as a result of being uprooted. In programs where participants speak different languages, finding bilingual support can be a challenge, but many programs have been successful in finding individuals who can do such advising either by working with community-based organizations that focus on certain ethnic groups or by sharing an advisor among agencies. (See Box 8.)

In some agencies, bilingual advisors are trained to represent the interests of the participants to the agency and to other social service providers. At the Refugee Women's Alliance in Seattle, Washington, for example, bilingual advisors are trained as client advocates, with staff encouraged to listen to and respond to participants' concerns. Such training is especially necessary for bilingual advisors from countries with hierarchical structures who might have the tendency here to focus exclusively on the interests of the agencies, disregarding the needs of the participants (pushing for quick job placement, for example, although the client may not have the English skills necessary to function at the job).

As a rule, agencies that turn job development over to another provider appear to have been much less successful than those that take on the responsibility for placing LEP participants themselves. Since most participants will not be fully proficient in English even after training, a job developer who is able to negotiate placements for immigrant participants and advocates on their behalf is invaluable. Employers reluctant to take an employee who still struggles with English will be more likely to give someone a chance if a job developer vouches for job performance and work values and can point to evidence from the client's education and training experience.

Practical field placements for hard-to-place participants tend to be most successful when supervisors share the responsibility of supporting the participants' efforts to understand language and rules and customs that govern the U.S. workplace (in general and those directly related to a specific job). Programs that provide these transition services can offer suggestions to supervisors on how to assist in

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language learning. Strategies might include preparing co-workers by distributing information about the culture and language of the new employee, encouraging conversations that allow the employee to use English in non-threatening ways, demonstrating work tasks, and checking understanding by asking that information be repeated.

Recommendations for National and State Policies

While education and training services for LEP adults are provided at the local level, national and state partners play a critical role in providing funding and guidance on program structure and practices. This section addresses specific actions federal and state policymakers can take to improve labor market outcomes for individuals with limited English. (See Box 2 on pp. 20-21 for brief descriptions of relevant federal programs.)

- **Make combined language, literacy, and job training services to LEP adults a key focus of federal programs under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA).**

In **Title I of WIA (employment and training)**, Congress should require state plans to describe how the service needs of LEP adults will be met; allow state reserve funds to be used for grants to create or expand combined ESL and job training services; make assessment of English proficiency part of core services; add ESL to the list of activities that can be provided in conjunction with other training activities for adults; and take into account the extent of limited English proficiency in the population served when adjusting expected levels of state and local performance. Sequential eligibility should be eliminated so that the full range of services can be provided at any point in time, based on an individual's needs. Finally, training performance measures should count English proficiency and literacy gains, as well as credential attainment, when coupled with job placement.

In **Title II of WIA (adult education)**, Congress should include increasing English proficiency for immigrants and preparing individuals for postsecondary education or training among the explicit purposes of adult education funding. States should be required to describe how, at the regional level, adult education will help prepare people with limited English skills and/or low basic skills to enter job training and other postsecondary education and facilitate those transitions. The federal peer review process for state plans should include ESL experts and service providers on the peer panel. In addition, the list of criteria to be used by states in awarding grants to local service providers should be simplified and more sharply focused, with an overall emphasis on increasing quality, such as hours of instruction and number of full-time teachers, and with particular attention to increasing English proficiency and to preparing individuals to enter job training and other postsecondary education. Finally, vocational ESL and vocational adult education should be added to the list of categories for required local activities.

In **both Title I and Title II**, Congress should allow national research and demonstration funds to be used to create or expand, and evaluate, employment programs for LEP individuals that combine job training, ESL, and literacy services. Programs that combine job training, ESL, and adult education, and receive both Title I and Title II funding under WIA, should be allowed to report on just one set of performance measures, either those of Title I or Title II, but not both as is currently required. Congress should also require states to report the number of combined job training and adult education programs funded through contracts under Title II or certified as eligible programs under Title I. Simply tracking this information over time will allow the federal government to better gauge the capacity of the field to provide these services, and to see whether various initiatives and incentives to create more combined services are having an effect.

- **Make federally funded employment and training services under WIA more accessible to job seekers with limited proficiency in English and provide referrals to appropriate training.**

Often services at the one-stop centers operating under WIA are not geared toward the needs of LEP job seekers. Services such as career counseling and vocational assessment are often only available in English,[92] or if translated, are above the native language reading level of clients. Computer-based systems for job search and career information require a level of both English and technological expertise that immigrants with few years of schooling generally lack.

Quite often, group counseling or assistance is only available in English or in the language of the majority of the non-English speaking participants. In some cases, there may be limited referrals to training programs appropriate for LEP job seekers, either because there are no programs that combine ESL and training, the referring person is not aware of them, the benefits of training and education (compared to job search only) are not recognized, or local policy prohibits longer term combined education and training options. Efforts need to be undertaken to make certain that services provided by the one-stop centers are appropriate for adults who do not speak English and that adequate training opportunities are offered for this growing population. This could be done through technical assistance provided by the Department of Labor at the national or state level. WIA policy on the use of contracts should be revised to clarify that contracts are appropriate when specialized services for LEP adults—such as services that combine ESL, literacy, and occupational training—are not readily available in a community. Finally, LEP adults in need of training should be able to receive those services immediately after an assessment determines such training is appropriate, rather than having to move through a sequence of core and intensive services before reaching training.

- **Give states the flexibility under TANF to provide low-income LEP parents with services designed to increase their skills and thus their earning potential.**

The TANF welfare reform block grant provides states with federal funds to operate cash assistance and employment programs for low-income parents. Recent research from welfare-to-work evaluations suggests that for those with low skills initially, at least a year and often longer is required for individuals to upgrade not just their basic skills but also obtain the occupational skills that qualify them for higher-paying jobs.[93] Over the next few years, helping low-income parents achieve economic self-sufficiency will take on renewed urgency as many parents will face the prospect of running out of eligibility for TANF due to the 60-month lifetime limit, even if they have been working and receiving only a small, supplemental TANF check. States need to have an array of policy choices at their disposal to achieve this goal, including extended employment-focused language and job skills training.

Specifically, LEP adults need enough time in education and training programs to gain the English, literacy, math, and job skills to obtain work that allows them to support their families, which often requires a recognized occupational certificate at minimum and possibly a degree. The current 12-month TANF limit on full-time education and training is often not enough time to allow them to complete a program; Congress should extend it to 24 months and allow states the option of aiding a small number of low-income parents over a longer period so they can obtain bachelor's degrees. In addition, more capacity is needed at the local level to provide training that is linked to employers and is accessible to those with limited English. The Business Linkage grants proposed in the Senate would help increase this capacity and should be included in final TANF reauthorization.

- **Allow states to provide TANF benefits and services to legal immigrants regardless of their dates of entry.**

The 1996 welfare reform law was the first time federal law regarding public benefits treated legal immigrants substantially differently than citizens. Legal immigrants are now federally restricted in their eligibility for TANF: most legal immigrants entering the U.S. after the enactment of welfare reform on August 22, 1996, are barred from receiving TANF benefits and services for five years. Furthermore, states are not required to serve immigrants who entered *before* enactment, although almost all states have chosen to do so. (A smaller share of states has chosen to provide state-funded benefits to eligible immigrants *during* their five-year bar from federal assistance.) Because of these changes, low-income immigrant parents may be unable to receive services such as job training or ESL classes funded through TANF. These services—along with TANF, cash aid, child care, and related health care—would allow them to improve their employment prospects and retain work, and thus to better support their families (which may include citizens).

Since TANF's primary goal is to provide needed services to help low-income families enter the workforce, it is counterproductive to deny those services to a large share of low-income families, simply because they entered the country after a certain date. Therefore, the TANF statute should be modified to bar discrimination against legal immigrants in the provision of TANF benefits and services.

- **Address the needs of low-income LEP adults in federal higher education policies.**

The federal Higher Education Act (HEA) provides funding for student aid programs, such as Pell Grants and student loans, and also includes a number of initiatives aimed at helping postsecondary institutions improve their performance. Congress should revise HEA to better meet the needs of low-income, LEP adults. For example, changes in Title IV in how financial need is calculated could improve the ability of student aid programs to support low-wage workers with limited English who are combining work and school. Another Title IV change that would help LEP adults is to give colleges the option of allowing students who lack formal high school credentials to demonstrate their ability to succeed in school not through an "ability-to-benefit test" but through actual academic performance during a trial period. Evidence from an experimental study by the U.S. Department of Education shows that students who initially failed the ability-to-benefit test but were allowed to receive financial aid after successfully completing six credits went on to have higher GPAs and to complete more credits than the students who initially passed the test.[94]

Federal leadership and funding could also help postsecondary institutions to tailor their occupational programs to the needs of LEP adults through other titles of HEA that support program improvement, especially at Hispanic-serving institutions. Modifications that could help LEP students to succeed include providing bridge programs for LEP students who are new to academic work; creating well-articulated transition programs that link adult education programs or non-credit college classes to credit-bearing courses; deemphasizing lectures and offering more "hands-on" learning; and allowing students to demonstrate what they've learned in applied situations rather than relying primarily on pencil-and-paper tests. This is a particular issue for high-demand jobs in health that draw a significant number of LEP students who have the requisite knowledge but have difficulties dealing with decontextualized tests. As in WIA, federal higher education policy should encourage colleges to implement models that combine ESL with technical skills training.

- **Fund scientifically based research on "what works" in training and education**

for adults with limited proficiency in English.

Providers of language and training services to LEP individuals desperately need scientifically based research that tells them "what works" for those with low levels of education who speak little English.[95] The educational community could greatly benefit from research and development efforts that investigate what it takes to combine English instruction and job training and what results will be if such models are implemented with various population groups. Studies are needed that use rigorous research techniques to examine the relationship between different kinds of training practices and participant outcomes. Two types of outcomes should be considered: (1) increases in job-related language and communication skills and (2) employment-oriented results, such as job placement, employment retention, and wage increases.

Such research could either be conducted in established programs or new "lab schools" that are specifically designed to develop and test an integrated model that focuses specifically on adults with limited proficiency in English. Such a model could reflect what "should work," given what we know from previous research and provide clear findings on "what does work." A demonstration model of this kind could be linked to the existing lab schools for Adult Basic Education (Rutgers University) and ESL (Portland State University), both funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (IES), formerly known as the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI).[96]

- **Link federally funded English language and job training efforts and promote program improvement through common definitions for data collection and technical assistance across adult education, ESL, and job training programs.**

Currently, there is no one office in the federal government that coordinates information on LEP individuals or education and training services for them.[97] A start would be to have the key programs that serve adults with limited English collect participant information. This should include asking about where they were born (nativity), how much education they had in their native country, when they arrived in the U.S., and some measure of English language ability (ideally a test score but at least the same type of questions that the Census Department asks).

In addition to this lack of basic data, there is no one source of information on research and promising practices for serving LEP adults in adult education and job training programs. These adults are subsumed under the general program guidelines for a range of other programs, such as WIA or TANF. Local providers have difficulty accessing specific information on how to best serve the increasing numbers of participants who want jobs or better jobs but whose English skills are too low for conventional job training.

The system could greatly benefit from an initiative that links information from various agencies and programs outlined in Box 2 (pp. 20-21) such as the Employment Training Agency in the U.S. Department of Labor (responsible for Title I of WIA), the Administration for Chil-dren and Families in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (responsible for TANF and the Office of Refugee Resettlement programs), and the Office of Adult and Vocational Education in the U.S. Department of Education (responsible for Title II of WIA). Such an initiative could significantly improve the delivery system for this population and benefit both LEP participants and employers. The purpose of the initiative would be to collect information on models that work, make recommendations for policy and practice, commission papers and digests,[98] and disseminate information specifi-

cally focused on education and training for participants who have limited proficiency in English. It would be important for such an initiative to be a collaborative effort between the relevant agencies, rather than being administered solely by any single one of them, so that all the necessary expertise is brought to bear on the issue.

States can also help improve service delivery for LEP participants by designating an office or a person to guide the field in providing services for those adults in the workforce who do not speak English well. Such an office can help coordinate services and collect information from the field so that effective models can be designed. The need is especially great in states relatively new to immigrants. In these areas, policymakers need to create an infrastructure for services that helps prepare education and training providers for a new group of participants with unique needs related to English language acquisition, acculturation, and job readiness.

- **Assist states and localities with new and growing immigrant populations to create an infrastructure of workforce development services for them.**

As noted earlier, new immigrants are increasingly choosing new places to live, and in these areas the infrastructure of services for them is less well developed. States such as Arkansas, Idaho, Iowa, Georgia, Kentucky, Minnesota, Nevada, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia generally have not traditionally received immigrants. Lacking the infrastructure to serve immigrants, these states and their workforce systems are not always well-prepared to assist newcomers in their quest for financial stability, including services to help them enter and advance in the workforce.

Federal funding and technical assistance is needed to help these areas create an infrastructure of services to meet the language and job skill needs of immigrants and of the local employers who need skilled workers. Such an infrastructure should include systems for training teachers and providing resources on effective models and structures for disseminating research and linking such research to practice. These new immigrant states will also need help in setting up collaborations that allow job training providers, employers, and agencies that provide English training to work together to develop education and training paths that are not dependent on individuals first completing ESL and GED programs. Funding for these purposes could be added to WIA Title II.

Finally, states are likely to need technical assistance on how to build the skills of immigrants and refugees from the poorest areas of the world, since participants are likely to face multiple barriers, including those related to access (child care and transportation) and training (little schooling, no or marginal levels of literacy, and little experience with industrialized work, including technology). Immigrants from poorer areas are also likely to need comprehensive services related to health, safety, and family crises, which are services that must be provided in a language that participants understand. As a result, states must focus on hiring qualified staff and working effectively with bilingual community workers in culturally diverse environments.

- **Support the development of "ESL workplace certificates," which establish English language competencies needed in particular jobs.**

To date there are no standards for workplace communication that outline the language competence necessary to succeed in particular work environments (e.g., service industry, health, technology). ESL teachers, most of whom are part-time, are often left to their own devices in deciding what to teach. In addition, there is very little employer or labor involvement in outlining the kinds of communication tasks that are most common or most important in the workplace. Immigrants who sign

up for classes have very little guarantee that the program in which they participate is of good quality or reflects current research in teaching work-related English skills.

The ESL training field could greatly benefit from a standard-setting effort that lays out what adults new to English need to know and be able to do to succeed in particular job clusters. These standards could then guide both pre-employment programs focused on language acquisition and training programs serving immigrants and refugees. Linked to these standards, workplace certificates could be developed that certify that a particular level of competence or proficiency has been achieved. Such certificates could provide job seekers and incumbent workers, as well as employers, with assurances that certain English proficiency levels, along with work-related cross-cultural skills, have been attained. This type of certificate could act as an alternative to the GED for those immigrants who completed their schooling in another country as well as for those who have less than a high school education. Possibly foundation-funded standards could be developed by agencies such as the National Institute for Literacy, which is spearheading efforts to establish a general Work Readiness Certificate and/or the Center for Applied Linguistics, which previously did work in the area of employment-related communication.[99]

* * *

If federal and state governments and local programs adopted the kinds of changes described here, and those changes were accompanied by substantially increased funding, many more LEP adults could improve their employment prospects. And increasing the economic well-being of our country's large and growing immigrant population would pay important dividends not only for these adults and their families, but also for our nation as a whole.

Endnotes

1 Ellwood, D. (2002). "How we got here" in *Grow faster together. Or grow slowly apart.* Washington, DC: The Aspen Institute.

2 Sum, A., Fogg, N., Harrington, P., with Khatiwada, I., Trubb'sky, M., & Palma, S. (2002, August). *Immigrant workers and the great American job machine: The contributions of new foreign immigration to national and regional labor force growth in the 1990s.* Boston, MA: Northeastern University.

3 CLASP calculations from U.S. Census Bureau. (2002). Retrieved from tables produced at http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DatasetMainPageServlet?_lang=en on September 25, 2002. Figures include the District of Columbia, but not Puerto Rico or other territories.

4 Sometimes the immigrant population is categorized as citizen and noncitizen, as opposed to foreign-born or immigrant and native. Naturalized citizens are more likely to speak English as they must have passed the citizenship test and resided in the country at least three and usually five years. It is important to note, however, that a share of the LEP population is native-born. Probably the largest such group is people born in Puerto Rico or other territories, although there are also some born to non-English-speaking families within the 50 states. Some researchers believe this group is growing, but few hard data are available. The 2000 Census estimates that 5.6 million native-born Americans over age 5 speak English less than "very well."

5 Estimates of the foreign-born population range from 30 million to over 33 million. The latest Current Population Survey estimates the population to be 32.5 million. See Schmidley, D. (2003, February). *The foreign-born population in the United States: March 2002.* Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau.

6 Schmidley, A.D. (2001, December). *Profile of the foreign-born population in the United States: 2000.* Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau, p. 16.

7 Capps, R., Ku, L., Fix, M., Furgiuele, C., Passel, J.S., Ramchand, R., et al. (2002, March). *How are immigrants faring after welfare reform? Preliminary evidence from Los Angeles and New York City.* Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.

8 Sum et al., 2002.

9 Ellwood, 2002.

10 CLASP calculations from U.S. Census Bureau, 2002.

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12 Schmidley, A.D., & Gibson, C. (1999). *Profile of the foreign-born population in the United States.* Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau, p. 16.

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14 Camarota, S.A., & Keeley, J. (2001, September). *The new Ellis Islands: Examining non-traditional areas of immigrant settlement in the 1990s.* Washington, DC: Center for Immigration Studies, p. 1.

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15 Carliner, G. (1995, August). *The language ability of U.S. immigrants: Assimilation and cohort effects.* Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research, Tables 2 and 3.

16 Office of Refugee Resettlement. (1999). *Annual report to Congress — 1999.* Retrieved from http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/orr/policy/99arc9.htm#_Toc519582113 on September 23, 2002, Table 5.

17 Freedman, S., Knab, J.T., Gennetian, L.A., & Navarro, D. (2000, June). *The Los Angeles Jobs-First GAIN evaluation: Final report on a work first program in a major urban center.* New York: Manpower Research Demonstration Corporation, Table 4.6.

18 Fix, M., & Zimmermann, W. (1999, June). *All under one roof: Mixed-status families in an era of reform.* Washington, DC: The Urban Institute, p. 4.

19 U.S. Census Bureau. (2001, September). *ESCAP II: Demographic analysis results.* Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from http://www.census.gov/dmd/www/ReportRec2.htm on April 10, 2002.

20 The Diversity Visa program provides visas to randomly drawn winners of a lottery of applicants who come from countries with low rates of immigration to the U.S. Currently 55,000 visas per year are provided under this program.

21 Schmidley, 2001, p. 20.

22 In order to be admitted, refugees must prove that in their home country they have a "well-founded fear of persecution" based on their race, religion, national origin, political opinions, or membership in a particular social group.

23 CLASP calculations from U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. (1998). *1997 statistical yearbook of the INS.* Retrieved from http://www.ins.gov/graphics/aboutins/statistics/Immigs.htm on April 10, 2002, Table 4, and U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. (2002). *2000 statistical yearbook of the INS.* Retrieved from http://www.ins.gov/graphics/aboutins/statistics/Immigs.htm on September 23, 2002, Table 4; Fix, M., Zimmermann, W., & Passel, J. (2001, July). *The integration of immigrant families in the United States.* Washington, DC: The Urban Institute, Figure 6.

24 Office of Refugee Resettlement. (2002). *Annual report to Congress — 2000.* Retrieved from http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/policy/arc_00.htm on February 6, 2003, Table 4.

25 Note that when the Census measures the presence of the foreign-born, they also capture "temporary" migrants such as students or long-term visitors, who do not actually intend to reside or work in the U.S.

26 Some research data collected on immigrants do not distinguish their status, so the information and analysis may include the undocumented.

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28 Greenberg, E., Macias, R.F., Rhodes, D., & Chan, T. (2001, August). *English literacy and language minorities in the United States.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, Figures 4.3 & 4.4.

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32 National Center for Education Statistics. (Date unknown). *The 1992 national adult literacy survey: Low literate adults (population diversity within the lowest literacy levels).* Retrieved from http://nces.ed.gov/naal/design/lowdiversity92.asp on April 10, 2002. The 1994 International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) also confirmed the relatively lower levels of literacy proficiency of the foreign-born, finding their literacy rates significantly lower than that of the native-born. See Sum, A., Kirsch, I., & Taggart, R. (2002, February). *The twin challenges of mediocrity and inequality: Literacy in the U.S. from an international perspective.* Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.

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intermediaries in the 21st century. R. Giloth (Ed.). Temple University Press. Currently available at www.clasp.org.

36 Acs, G. (1999, May). *A profile of low-wage workers*. Retrieved from http://www.dol.gov/asp/programs/history/herman/reports/futurework/conference/lowwage/lowwage_toc.htm on September 26, 2002, Table 11. Note that "low-income" is defined as an annual family income below $24,600.

37 Schmidley, 2001, Figure 16-1.

38 Fix, M., Zimmermann, W., & Passel, J.S. (2001, July). *The integration of immigrant families in the United States*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute, Figure 13.

39 Schmidley, 2001, Figure 17-1.

40 See U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (1999). *The low-wage labor market: Challenges and opportunities for economic self-sufficiency*. Washington, DC: Author, for a review of relevant literature.

41 U.S. Census Bureau. (Date unknown). *Profile of the foreign-born population in the United States, 2000 (detailed tables for P23-206)*. Retrieved from http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/foreign/ppl-145.html on September 23, 2002, Tables 19-2A & 19-2B.

42 Capps et al., 2002.

43 Most notably, states now have the option of providing federal TANF assistance to qualified immigrants who arrived before welfare reform's enactment on August 22, 1996, and to those who arrived after enactment once they've been present in the U.S. for at least five years. States may also provide state-funded TANF to immigrants who arrived after enactment during the "five-year bar." A number of states have availed themselves of these options: 49 provide federal TANF to pre-enactment immigrants, and 19 states provide state-funded TANF to post-enactment immigrants, although many of the state-funded programs are very restrictive regarding whom they serve.

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45 Lofstrom, M., & Bean, F.D. (2001, July). *Labor market conditions and post-reform declines in welfare receipt among immigrants*. Irvine, CA: Authors.

46 Capps, R. (2001, February). *Hardship among children of immigrants: Findings from the 1999 National Survey of America's Families*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.

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48 Capps et al., 2002.

49 Much of this discussion is drawn from Martinson, K., & Strawn, J. (2003). *Built to last: Why skills matter for long-run success in welfare reform*. Washington, DC: Center for Law and Social Policy, the National Institute for Literacy, and the National Adult Education Professional Development Consortium.

50 In the Minority Single Parent Demonstration, which included the CET program and focused on low-income female single parents (primarily welfare recipients), roughly 80 percent of the participants were Hispanic. See Zambrowski, A., & Gordon, A. (1993). *Evaluation of the minority single parent demonstration: Fifth-year impacts at CET*. Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. In the JOBSTART evaluation, which also included CET and focused on young high school dropouts, over 70 percent of the participants were Hispanic. See Cave, G., Bos, H., Doolittle, F., & Toussaint, C. (1993). *JOBSTART: Final report on a program for school dropouts*. New York: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.

51 Zambrowski & Gordon, 1993.

52 Cave et al., 1993.

53 Gueron, J.M., & Hamilton, G. (2002). *The role of education and training in welfare reform*. Welfare Reform and Beyond, Policy Brief #20. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution. Available at www.brookings.edu/wrb.

54 Other evaluations have shown that programs that provide a range of services—primarily education, training, and job search—produce the best results. Most notably, the Riverside GAIN program, which operated in the late 1980s, had a strong employment focus but also allowed participation in education activities (60 percent participated in education or training) and produced impacts similar to Portland. In

addition, both the San Diego SWIM program and the Baltimore Options program, which also operated in the 1980s, produced substantial earnings impacts through job search as well as education and training.

55 Hamilton, G., Freedman, S., Gennetian, L., Michalopoulos, C., Walter, J., Adams-Ciardullo, D., et al. (2001). *How effective are different welfare-to-work approaches? Five year adult and child impacts for eleven programs.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families and Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation; and U.S. Department of Education. Available at www.mdrc.org.

56 Freedman, S., Friedlander, D., Hamilton, G., Rock, J., Mitchell, M., Nudelman, J., et al. (2000). *Evaluating alternative welfare-to-work approaches: Two-year impacts for eleven programs.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families and Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation; and U.S. Department of Education. Available at www.mdrc.org.

57 Scrivener, S., Hamilton, G., Farrell, M., Freedman, S., Friedlander, D., Mitchell, M., et al. (1998). *The national evaluation of welfare-to-work strategies: Implementation, participation patterns, costs, and two-year impacts of the Portland (Oregon) welfare-to-work program.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Education. Available at www.mdrc.org.

58 Scrivener et al., 1998.

59 Earnings gains ranged from 8 to 17 percent ($1,500 to $2,500), and the reduction in months on welfare ranged from 8 to 14 percent.

60 Hamilton et al., 2001.

61 For example, in the NEWWS evaluation, effects were smaller for the basic education-focused programs than for the employment-focused programs, with earnings gains in these programs ranging from about 4 to 13 percent ($800 to $2,000) and reductions in the time spent on welfare ranging from 4 to 14 percent.

62 Hamilton, et al., 2001; Strawn, J. (1998). *Beyond job search or basic education: Rethinking the role of skills in welfare reform.* Washington, DC: Center for Law and Social Policy. Available at www.clasp.org. Pauly, E., & Di Meo, C. (1995). *Adult education for people on AFDC: A synthesis of the research.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families and Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation; and U.S. Department of Education. Available at www.mdrc.org.

63 Hamilton et al., 2001.

64 Evaluations of welfare-to-work programs have found that the majority of welfare recipients who enrolled in basic education did not obtain a GED, and most programs studied did not raise welfare recipients' scores on a test of basic skills. Further, no clear relationship can be seen in this research between programs that raised test scores or increased GED receipt and those that raised earnings. This is consistent with research on adult education programs more generally. See Pauly & Di Meo, 1995; Beder, H.W. (1998). *The outcomes and impacts of adult literacy education in the United States.* Cambridge, MA: National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL).

65 Service quality appears important for educational outcomes. San Diego County—the only one of five California GAIN county programs studied that raised recipients' test scores—had developed an entirely new system of learning centers just for welfare recipients, which featured computerized instruction, specially trained staff, off-campus locations, and more hours of instruction per week than regular adult education classes. See Martinson, K., & Friedlander, D. (1994). *GAIN: Basic education in a welfare-to-work program.* New York: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.

66 Hamilton et al., 2001.

67 This analysis did not include Portland but rather relied on three education-focused sites where fewer individuals made the transition to postsecondary education or vocational training than in Portland.

68 Bos, J., Scrivener, S., Snipes, J., & Hamilton, G. (2001). *Improving basic skills: The effects of adult education in welfare-to-work programs.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families and Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation; and U.S. Department of Education. Available at www.mdrc.org.

69 Bos et al., 2001.

70 Bos et al., 2001.

71 Domestic Strategy Group. (2002). *Grow faster together. Or grow slowly apart.* Washington, DC: Aspen Institute.

72 This includes an ongoing study for the Department of Labor on the U.S.-Mexico border. See Spruck Wrigley, H., & Powrie, J. (2003). *Language, literacy, and employment on the U.S.-Mexico border.* San Mateo, CA: Aguirre International.

73 Frank, A., Rahmanou, H., and Savner, S. (2003, March). *The Workforce Investment Act: A first look at participation, demographics, and services.* Washington, DC: CLASP.

74 CLASP analysis of The Workforce Investment Act Standardized Record Data (WIASRD), Program Year 2000. Data not included from AL, LA, NY, and PA.

75 U.S. Department of Education. (2001). Retrieved from http://www.ed.gov/offices/OVAE/AdultEd/2003alloc.html on July 7, 2003.

76 Murphy, G. (2003, January). *The nation's adult education and literacy system.* Washington, DC: The National Coalition for Literacy and the National Adult Education Professional Development Consortium.

77 Note that voluntary agencies generally continue serving refugees beyond their first year in the country.

78 Office of Refugee Resettlement. (2002). *Annual report to Congress—2000.* Retrieved from http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/policy/arc_00.htm on February 6, 2003, Table 4.

79 Office of Refugee Resettlement, 2002, Table 6.

80 Holcomb, P., & Martinson, K. (2002). *Implementing welfare reform across the nation.* Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.

81 Greenberg, M., & Richer, E. (2003). *How states used TANF and MOE funds in FY 2002: The picture from federal reporting.* Washington, DC: CLASP.

82 Greenberg, M., & Rahmanou, H. (2003, March). *TANF participation in 2001.* Washington, DC: CLASP.

83 California Budget Project. (2002, December). *Timing out: CalWORKs recipients face the state's five-year time limit.* Sacramento, CA: Author. Retrieved from http://www.cbp.org/2002/bb021231timingout.pdf on March 24, 2003, Table 2.

84 Research in England in workplace communication has stressed the need for immigrants to acquire social language used at work along with the technical language of the job. Refugees who were not able to make small talk or connect with others during break were seen as standoffish and were less likely to be promoted than others whose use of social language signaled that they were "fitting in" with their co-workers. A trainer in Chicago once mentioned that the ability to respond appropriately to questions such as "How about them Cubs?" could go a long way in helping a person to be accepted by those native to the city.

85 The Center for Employment Training, for example, uses a competency-based model that allows workers to complete competencies at their own pace, and participants are eligible for services until they meet all competencies required to complete training. Individuals work in pairs or small groups and bilingual instructors or more advanced participants help translate occasionally. All "book learning" is linked directly to job tasks.

86 One of the greatest barriers to success in training programs for LEP participants are pencil-and-paper tests. Especially problematic are multiple choice tests that require savvy test taking skills (such as knowing that the obvious answer is quite often the wrong answer designed to tempt those who know very little). In addition, multiple choice tests often demand sophisticated linguistic and cognitive skills such as understanding sentences with double negatives ("Which of the following is seldom not true?"), skills that those who don't speak English well and have not gone through the U.S. school system seldom have. Programs that work for LEP adults often take a dual approach. They design assessments that rely, at least in part, on demonstration of actual skills, such as Nursing Assistant students taking blood pressure, and/or provide training in test taking skills so that participants can pass licensing exams.

87 A Russian engineer, for example, may have completed only short-term technical training and may have worked as an electrician or a maintenance person. In this case, his credentials would not be equivalent to the U.S. educational level for engineers.

88 See also Social Research and Demonstration Corporation. (1999). *An evaluation of work-based programs for youth: A report to the National Literacy Secretariat.* Ottawa, Canada: Author; U.S.

Department of Labor. (1995, January). *What's working (and what's not): A summary of research on the economic impacts of employment and training programs.* Washington, DC: Author.

89 This is drawn from Poppe et al., 2003.

90 This figure is reprinted from Poppe et al., 2003.

91 See also Spruck Wrigley, H., & Powrie, J. (forthcoming). *Meeting the challenge on the border.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Labor, a report on language and literacy on the U.S.-Mexico border.

92 See also Wonacott, M.E. (2000). *Preparing limited English proficient persons for the workplace,* ERIC Digest No. 216.

93 See Martinson & Strawn, 2003.

94 U.S. Department of Education. (2002, October). *Summary of the 2000-2001 experimental sites initiative analysis report.* Washington, DC: Author.

95 While the Department of Education has funded a five-year study on "What Works in Adult ESL Literacy" (Condelli and Wrigley, forthcoming), the study did not examine employment training programs for LEP adults or programs focused on Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL).

96 For more details on these lab sites, see the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy at Harvard at www.gse.harvard.edu/~ncsall/labsites.html.

97 The service system for immigrants and refugees in the United States is highly fragmented. There is no single policy that speaks to the education and training of LEP adults; rather, there is a patchwork of services provided by a variety of departments, including the Department of Labor, the Department of Education, and the Department of Health and Human Services, along with various state initiatives. See also Chisman, F., Spruck Wrigley, H., & Ewen, D. (1994). *ESL and the American dream.* Washington, DC: Southport Institute of Policy Analysis.

98 The ERIC Clearinghouse on Career and Vocational Education tends not to address LEP issues in its publications, while the clearinghouse that deals with adult ESL (the National Clearinghouse ESL Literacy Education [NCLE]) has not published a digest of a paper on employment or training since 1997.

99 See NCLE issues papers related to "vocational and workplace ESL instruction" at www.cal.org/ncle/NCLEISUHTM.

Appendix
Promising Program Models and Practices

This appendix provides short descriptions of some programs that provide innovative services to LEP individuals, using many of the policies and practices recommended in this paper. These programs use a range of approaches to providing services, including *bilingual* programs (which teach skills training in the native language of the participants), *integrated* programs (which teach both English and skills training concurrently), and *sequential* programs (where individuals begin with English language classes and progress to skills training after a certain level of English proficiency is attained). The programs profiled here all serve individuals with limited English proficiency, but they vary in their goals, targeting different populations and tailoring programs to the skill levels of their participants. The common link among the programs presented here is the effort to combine language and job training instruction in a single program for LEP individuals.

Most of the programs in this appendix have not been rigorously evaluated, but they are included because they use approaches that push the boundaries of traditional program designs. These programs are typically small; taking such models to a larger scale will be a critical challenge for the field. The outcomes presented for each program are those reported by program staff. They are not comparable across programs because of differences in program models and services, populations served, and data collection techniques. The profiles are presented alphabetically.

BILINGUAL PROGRAMS

Organization	Location	Program
HIRE Center	Milwaukee, WI	Milwaukee Spanish Tech Track
Instituto del Progreso Latino	Chicago, IL	Chicago Manufacturing Technology Bridge Program

INTEGRATED PROGRAMS

Organization	Location	Program
Center for Employment and Training	San Jose, CA	Currently offers 17 occupational areas
Chinese American Service League	Chicago, IL	Chef Training Program
El Paso Community College	El Paso, TX	Motivation, Education and Training (MET)
Guadalupe Centers, Inc.	Kansas City, MO	Culinary Arts Institute

SEQUENTIAL PROGRAMS

Organization	Location	Program
International Institute of Minnesota	St. Paul, MN	Nursing Assistant Program
International Institute of the East Bay	Oakland, CA	CAREGIVERS Program
Jewish Vocational Services	San Francisco, CA	Office Technology & Communications Program
Lifetrack Resources	St. Paul, MN	Functional Work English Program
Seattle Jobs Initiative	Seattle, WA	Manufacturing-Focused Adult Basic Education/English as a Second Language Training

Center for Employment and Training

San Jose, California, and other locations

Program goals: From its inception in 1967, the primary goal of Center for Employment Training (CET) has been to assist hard-to-serve clients obtain stable employment and self-sufficiency. They do this by providing a comprehensive program that consists of hands-on job skills training that is integrated with the basic skills and English communication skills required to succeed on the job. Although CET serves students from all ethnic groups, the majority of its training centers are located in and serve largely Hispanic communities. Over the past 35 years, CET has trained and placed over 100,000 people into jobs.

Program size and funding: CET is one of the nation's largest non-profit employment training organizations. It encompasses a network of 33 training centers operating in 12 states. CET receives funding from federal and local sources, principally through the Workforce Investment Act. With funding from the U.S. Department of Labor's National Farmworker Jobs Program, CET is the nation's largest retrainer of migrant and seasonal farmworkers. Accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, CET's courses are approved for federal student financial aid, such as Pell grants.

During the 2001-2002 fiscal year (July 1, 2001–June 30, 2002), CET served 5,056 students. Its largest training center, known as the Sobrato Center, is located in downtown San Jose, California. The data provided below reflect the services provided only at this site during the last fiscal year.

Population served: During the last fiscal year at the Sobrato Center, CET served 932 students. Of these, 508 were women and 424 were men. The majority of the students were Hispanic (84 percent). Asians and Pacific Islanders (11 percent), African Americans (2 percent), Caucasians (2 percent), and Native Americans (1 percent) were also served. Sixty-seven percent of the students had not completed high school (315 had dropped out between grades 9 and 12, and 305 had an 8th grade education or less). CET reports that 71 percent of their students were limited English speaking. Based on an initial assessment using the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) tests, nearly two-thirds of enrollees scored below the 8th grade in reading and math.

Program design: CET is noted for its "contextual learning model" in which job training, basic education skills, and language education are integrated. CET simulates on-the-job conditions by requiring students to comply with strict attendance rules, punch in on a time clock, and attend classes Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Job training is based on a hands-on model in which students use equipment and materials similar to what they will find on a job. Basic skills and ESL are taught along with and, to the extent possible, directly in the context of vocational skills training. CET employs job developers to work with employers to help place students in training-related jobs.

Training is individualized and self-paced. Students may enter the program at any time (admissions are open entry, open exit) and complete the program when they have sufficient skills to find a training-related job. The projected average training times for courses vary based on the complexity of the course and the needs of the typical students. For example, a course in automated office skills is projected to last an average 810 hours (23 weeks), the child care provider course is projected at 900 hours (26 weeks), and the PC technician course is 630 hours (18 weeks). Most courses are open to all applicants who meet funder eligibility requirements without regard to their initial education or English literacy levels.

Training options available at the San Jose Sobrato Center:

- Account Clerk/Bookkeeper
- Automotive Maintenance Technician
- Automotive Specialist
- Building Maintenance
- Building Maintenance Service Technician
- Computerized Accounting
- Child Care Provider
- Commercial Food Service
- Data Entry/Computer Operator
- Electronic Assembly
- Medical Assistant
- Machine Tool Operator
- Machine Setup Operator
- PC Technician
- Printing/Graphic Arts
- Sheet Metal Fabricator
- Shipping, Receiving, Warehouse Operator

Program outcomes reported (July 1, 2001–June 30, 2002):

Terminations:	570
Placements:	484 (85%)
Training-related placements:	406 (84%)
Average entry wage:	$10.83/hour

Contact for more information: Erica Huey, Program Analyst/Internal Auditor, Center for Employment Training, 9960 Indiana Avenue, Riverside, CA 92503, (909) 351-3100, ericah@cet2000.org

Chinese American Service League

Chicago, Illinois

Chef Training Program

Program goals: The purpose of the Chef Training program is to prepare immigrant populations with the basic knowledge and skills needed to enter the food service industry. In addition, a secondary goal is to find meaningful employment and achieve long-term financial security for program participants.

Program size and funding: This program is funded through the Mayor's Office of Workforce Development, Department of Commerce and Community Affairs, and Workforce Investment Act funding. The budget for this program is approximately $350,000 per year, and it serves 100 individuals annually.

Population served: The population served through this program is mostly Chinese with about 85 percent of students originating from China. The remaining 15 percent are African immigrants and refugees, African Americans, and Hispanic Americans. Most of the participants have limited English skills, and all are low-income. The amount of formal education in their native countries varies significantly from none to master's degrees; most students have prior work experience.

Program design: The Chef Training program is a 16-week class consisting of 12 weeks of cooking skills training and four weeks of paid on-the-job training. The students attend classes Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. The Chinese American Service League (CASL) uses the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) for assessment purposes, and students generally improve two levels throughout the program. The program has been in operation for over 14 years.

In the morning, associates attend hands-on cooking skills classes where they learn basic cooking skills, food preparation, sanitation, and menu planning. In the afternoon, they attend vocational ESL (VESL) classes in which they cover appropriate vocabulary, as well as job search and interview skills. All classes are in English; however, the VESL instructor attends cooking classes and co-teaches with the chef instructor to facilitate the hands-on learning.

The program has strong ties to potential employers through field trips to potential work sites, visits to various restaurants, and chef guest speakers, in addition to the four weeks of on-the-job training. In addition, CASL offers many support services to help students complete the program and succeed in the workplace, which include free transportation to and from class, on-the-job counseling, and follow-up services after placement. As CASL is a comprehensive, multi-service organization, chef training associates have access to other support services, such as child care, social and mental health services, and housing assistance. At the completion of the program, graduates generally secure employment in hotels, restaurants, and hospitals.

Program outcomes reported:

Program completion:	90-95 percent
Job placement:	Historically, 80 percent (has varied significantly in the last two sessions because of the economy in Chicago)
Placement wages:	Range from $6.90-$10.50, average $8.50/hour
Gains in literacy and/or language proficiency:	2-3 levels (TABE test)
Job retention:	60 percent (90 days)
Job advancement:	Generally pay increases yearly

Contact for more information: Ricky Lam, Manager of Employment and Training, Chinese American Service League, 310 West 24th Place, Chicago, Illinois 60616, (312) 791-0418.

Motivation, Education, and Training

El Paso, Texas

El Paso Community College Motivation, Education, and Training (MET) Construction Program

Program goals: The purpose of the MET construction program is to prepare former farm workers for jobs that have promise in the current economy. The Introduction to the Construction Manager training program is designed to build the job skills needed for the trades, along with the literacy, math, and vocational English skills necessary to succeed in training and at the worksite. Applied technology skills are integrated as well, as is document reading, such as interpreting blueprints. Numeracy skills related to measurements and other job-specific tasks are included as well.

Program size and funding: The MET program is funded through the Department of Labor as part of the Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers grants. Funds go to public agencies and non-profit groups to provide training and other employability development services to economically disadvantaged families whose principal livelihood is gained in migratory and other forms of seasonal farm work. The grants are partially funded through the Workforce Investment Act. MET operates throughout the United States and provides training, rehabilitation, job development, and family assistance. Eligible farm workers receive stipends for participation in the MET program. El Paso Community College runs one of the training programs for MET in Texas. Since 1997, more than 450 farm workers have been trained in plastic injection molding. In January 2002, MET training shifted from plastic injection molding to construction in response to shifts in employment demands. Since then, 135 farm workers and members of their families have completed the training. So far this year, MET has spent $300,000 in stipends and supportive services to their clients (July 2002-March 2003) and $210,000 in tuition for additional vocational training to serve 55 individuals (July-March).

Population served: The population served through this program consists predominantly of Latino farm workers who need retraining. Ninety-eight percent are Hispanic and 2 percent are Anglo (Caucasian non-Hispanic); 92 percent of the foreign born farm workers are from Mexico, and 6 percent are from the Caribbean and Central American countries; 98 percent of participants speak Spanish, and 87 percent have limited proficiency in English. The average level of schooling is three years of elementary education in Mexico; a fair number have never attended school. Eighty-five percent do not have work experience outside of farm work and the vast majority has an annual household income below $5,000.

Program design: The construction program represents an integrated training model that combines basic skills (primarily math), English communication skills, and the Spanish GED (when funds are available) with job-specific skills training in construction. The Introduction to the Construction Manager program is a 28-week class consisting of eight weeks of Spanish GED and computer skills (taught bilingually), with 20 weeks of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and job skills classes related to construction in the areas of foundations, roofing, drywall, framing, exterior and interior painting, and entrepreneurship. Construction training is mostly hands-on. Basic principles are covered in the classroom followed by hands-on application as students build a house in the college parking lot.

The students attend classes Monday through Friday, from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. After completion of the college training, the students continue with a local employer where they receive on-the-job training for an additional 12 weeks. Construction classes are held in the morning, before the desert heat makes hands-on work difficult, while English and math are

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offered in the afternoons. These classes use bilingual support to get information across, although the construction supervisor uses primarily English on the job.

Participants in the training program receive assistance for a wide array of personal needs, including comprehensive housing services (home ownership assistance, rehabilitation/repair, emergency lodging, leveraging funds, etc.), medical care, emergency food needs, transportation assistance, and other services that address individual barriers to employment.

Program outcomes reported:

Program completion:	96 percent (varies from year to year)
Placement:	84 percent
Placement wages:	Range from $6.50-$9.75/hour
Gains in literacy and/or language proficiency:	Moreno Spanish literacy test: 4 grades CASAS: 5 points
Job retention:	60 percent (90 days)
Job advancement:	Numbers not available, but pay generally increases yearly

Contact for more information: Sara Martinez, Motivation, Education, and Training (MET), El Paso Community College, 4191 North Mesa, Room 234, El Paso, TX 79902, SaraM.LLCampus.EPCCLL@epcc.edu

Guadalupe Center, Inc.

Kansas City, Missouri

Guadalupe Center's Culinary Arts Institute

Program goals: The Culinary Arts Institute aims to place Hispanics and other urban core residents into local food service industry jobs to both reduce unemployment and underemployment in the urban core community and to reduce long-term food service industry job vacancies.

Program size and funding: The program, which began July 1, 2000, is funded by a three-year, $2 million earmark grant from the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. To date, the program has trained over 360 individuals and placed 215 in employment in the food service industry.

Population served: The Culinary Arts Institute program serves all urban core residents; however, the program is approximately 60 percent Hispanic, 20 percent African American, 15 percent white, and about 5 percent Asian/Pacific Islander. More than half of the trainees, referred to as associates, are women between the ages of 25-35. Associates must have a basic understanding of English, and two language assistance courses are offered (day and evening). In addition, the Servsafe exam, a national certificate issued by the National Restaurant Association, is offered in both English and Spanish.

Program design: The training program is nine weeks and is comprised of three parts: Servsafe (classroom setting), basic culinary skills (kitchen setting), and job search. Classes are four days per week and associates are expected to clock in and out of training as if they were on the job in order to prepare them for the workplace. The LEP population is about 30 percent of the total population, and LEP associates usually attend evening classes, although they can opt for the day program. In the evening, a translator attends the classes and provides both oral and written support in Spanish. All of the culinary institute associates are assigned case managers and undergo intense assessment in order to identify and ameliorate any barriers to completing the program, including child care, transportation, housing, and mental health concerns. For the nine weeks of training (four days per week), the program will pay for child care and arrange for transportation to and from class.

For six months post-graduation, the center will assist with child care (the center operates a child care facility for children between two and five years of age), provide indirect financial assistance for equipment (knives, etc.) and transportation, and will provide follow-up case management to ensure job retention and to help ease the transition to work life. In addition, all staff are trained to be culturally appropriate when working with LEP clients; discrimination on the job (how to recognize it, what are workers rights) is discussed. The program has strong links to area employers through its Advisory Board, which consists of executive chefs of major hotels and restaurants. The program established working relationships with over 1,000 local employers. Associates also make several site visits during the course to various job sites to become familiar with different types of positions available in the food service industry.

Program outcomes reported:

Program completion:	85 percent who complete program pass the Servsafe exam
Job placement:	~67 percent
Placement wages:	Average $9/hour (range $7.25-$13/hour)
Credentials attained:	Servsafe (nationally recognized certificate)
Job retention:	~70 percent (after 6 months)

Contact for more information: Memo Lona, Associate Director for Adult Education and Employment, Guadalupe Centers, Inc., 1015 Avenida Cesar E. Chavez, Kansas City, MO 64108, (816) 472-4770

HIRE Center

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Milwaukee Spanish Tech Track (MSTT)

Program goals: The goal of the MSTT program is to provide bilingual training to Spanish-speaking dislocated and incumbent workers in the field of manufacturing and to prepare them to enter hard-to-fill jobs with Milwaukee-area manufacturers.

Program size and funding: The MSTT was designed and directed by the HIRE Center using federal funding through a Department of Labor demonstration grant. The HIRE Center is a consortium of the Private Industry Council of Milwaukee County, the State Department of Workforce Development, the AFL-CIO Labor Education and Training Center, Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC), and the United Way of Greater Milwaukee. The program began in 1999 with a $1 million federal grant awarded to 10 communities and then was continued with additional Department of Labor funding awarded to five communities in 2001. Approximately 70 students have graduated from the program since its inception.

Population served: The MSTT program participants are Spanish-speaking, both male and female, and the average age is 35 years. Initially, funding was primarily for dislocated workers; however, the second grant helped expand the program to include an incumbent worker component.

Program design: The MSTT offers two different bilingual programs for dislocated workers, Computer Numerically Controlled (CNC) Machining and Industrial Maintenance Mechanic (IMM). In about 600 hours over 16 weeks (37.5 hours per week), students engage in a compressed manufacturing and technical training in Spanish that includes approximately 100 hours of occupational ESL in a course entitled Machining Communication Skills. All students take a pre-math course prior to the beginning of the technical training that prepares them to work with decimals, fractions, units of measure, and simple formulas. To enroll in the training program, students must be able to compute the four basic operations with whole numbers. The requirements for entry into the CNC machining and IMM differ slightly. The Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) ESL appraisal and the CASAS Spanish Language Proficiency tests are administered to determine a student's level. For CNC machining, no minimum level is formally set. For IMM, a student generally needs to be functioning at a fourth to fifth grade level in math and Spanish to be able to succeed in the program.

With an intensive and long daily schedule at the MATC, students study math, occupational English, and machine blueprint and schematic reading, in addition to taking technical training courses. IMM students study electricity and electronics, basic hydraulics and pneumatics, IM power transmission, IM rigging, and IM basic welding. Classes and materials are all in Spanish with English translations provided and verbal translation during class to familiarize students with English terms. All instructors are fully bilingual and are instructors, not interpreters. The HIRE Center has strong connections with the industry and potential employers to assist graduates with job placement. The program reports 100 percent wage replacement (graduates earn as much in their new jobs as they had prior to the program) and high retention rates.

Program outcomes reported:

Program completion (both programs):	82 percent
For CNC Machining:	
Job placement:	92 percent
Placement wages:	$10.53/hour (average)
Job retention:	92 percent (90 days)

For IMM:	
Job placement:	75 percent
Placement wages:	$11.77/hour (average)
Job retention:	83 percent (90 days)

Contact for more information: Roger Hinkle, HIRE Center Manager, or Bertha Gonzalez, Project Manager, HIRE Center, 816 W. National Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53204, (414) 385-6958

International Institute of Minnesota

St. Paul, Minnesota

Nursing Assistant Program

Program goals: To prepare individuals to become certified nursing assistants.

Program size and funding: The program serves approximately 140 students per year. It is funded by the Office of Refugee Resettlement, the United Way, the McKnight Foundation, and private grants.

Population served: More than 90 percent of the students are originally from Africa—primarily Ethiopia, Liberia, and Somalia. Most have received formal education in their own country. Seventy percent of the students are women.

Program design: The International Institute of Minnesota offers two Nursing Assistant Programs—one is eight weeks and the other is 11 weeks. The 11-week program is for those who require more intensive English language instruction. Classes meet five days a week from 8:30 am to 2:30 p.m. Individuals must pass a relatively rigorous intake process that includes an initial phone interview, an entrance test (reading, writing, and listening in English), and an interview (with a focus on verbal skills). There are 12 students per class, and there is generally a waiting list to get into the program.

They use the curriculum developed by the state for nursing assistants and supplement it with instruction on English language, life skills, and cultural workplace issues. They have found that preparing individuals for cultural workplace issues that can arise is important for retention. Classes are co-taught by a nurse and an ESL teacher. After the training program, an employment specialist helps students find jobs. Generally, the jobs are full-time with benefits and pay approximately $10.50 to $11 per hour.

The Institute also offers two other programs for students who finish the Nursing Assistant Program. The Academic Skills for Medical Advancement is a 20-week preparatory course for students interested in obtaining more medical training at a technical college to become, for example, a licensed practical nurse. Students spend four hours per day, four days per week intensively studying academic writing, reading, and vocabulary. The Medical Career Advancement Program is designed to build students' confidence in navigating the American higher education system in the medical field, to improve their success in medical education programs, and to provide some financial assistance.

Program outcomes reported: In 2002, 93 percent of those who enrolled (114 out of 123) completed the training, and 100 percent of those who completed the training were certified. Most graduates are still working as nursing assistants six months after beginning work.

Contact for more information: Michael Donahue, International Institute of Minnesota, 1694 Como Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55108, (651) 647-0191, ext. 318

International Institute of the East Bay

Oakland, California

Caregivers Job Training and Placement Program

Program goals: The primary goal of the program is to assist immigrant and refugee women in becoming self-sufficient through increasing their English skills and job skills in the area of early childhood education.

Program size and funding: The Caregivers Program is in its 18th year with a budget of $250,000. Funding is largely foundation-based and in-kind collaboration with Merritt College, the Oakland Unified School District, and the Jesuit Volunteer Corp. For the past three years, The International Institute of the East Bay has received federal welfare funds (known in California as CalWorks) to help support this program. The program serves approximately 75 women per year.

Population served: Although open to everyone, the program has only served women, largely immigrants and refugees. The women are from various countries, including those in Latin America, Africa, Southeast Asia, and a large contingent from Bosnia. The average age of the women is 39, and most have school-age children and previous work experience. Historically, the entrants have little to no formal education and low English proficiency, although this changes from year to year.

Program design: The Caregivers Program has two tracks and four components. Individuals are assessed during an orientation and intake meeting using an in-house assessment. During this process, an individual plan is drawn up with a case manager according to the learning goals of the client and the results of the language assessment. The case manager makes appropriate referrals for additional support services, such as mental health services. The four components of the full track are vocational ESL (VESL), early childhood education (ECE) classes, career and personal development (CPD) classes, and an internship. VESL classes are open entry, open exit to allow those who need additional language support to attend prior to beginning ECE coursework. In addition, clients with previous work experience in child care may choose a "fast track" where they can opt out of the internship.

Classes meet four days per week from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., and one day per week students attend an internship at a daycare center. All classes are taught in English. The ECE classes are taught by teachers from Merritt College, so students earn college credits through the program. VESL classes focus on "workplace" skills, such as ECE vocabulary and communicating with supervisors and coworkers, through peer learning and group activities. The CPD class covers a wide range of topics, including self-esteem, self-sufficiency, workers' rights, interviewing, and resume writing. The program has established important linkages with local employers both through a history of successful placements and the internship program. Former participants often return to talk with current students about the ECE field. The focus is on empowerment, as well as job skills that support job retention and continued education and training.

Program outcomes reported:

Program completion:	82 percent
Placement in further education/training:	76 percent
Job placement:	23 percent (most continue on to college to take the additional credits needed for placement in the field)
Placement wages:	$7-$15/hour depending on type of placement
Credentials attained:	6 ECE (college-level) credits (required in CA for ECE providers)
Job retention:	88 percent (180 days)

Contact for more information: Carrie Parrish, Caregivers Program Specialist, International Institute of the East Bay, 297 Lee Street, Oakland, CA 94610, (510) 451-2846, ext. 307

Instituto del Progreso Latino
Chicago, Illinois

Chicago Manufacturing Technology Bridge Program (CMTBP)—Bilingual Component

Program goals: To prepare native Spanish speaking adults for jobs in the manufacturing sector and "bridge" them to other educational programs.

Program size and funding: CMTBP began in 1997; however, the bilingual component (BC) began in January 2001. Funding for the bridge programs comes from a variety of sources, including the Workforce Investment Act and state and city workforce development funds. The BC serves approximately 130 students annually.

Population served: The BC serves Latinos, mostly Mexicans. The average age of the participants in the first graduating group was 38 years, and 82 percent of the students were women. The range of formal education obtained prior to the program was one to six years. The students had varying degrees of English proficiency, but for the most part, the initial English proficiency level was quite low. However, the students generally enter the program with extensive work experience.

Program design: The BC is 16 weeks. For those with very minimal English skills, a 14-week Vocational ESL (VESL) component runs prior to the BC manufacturing bridge classes. Within the VESL classes students learn basic math, English, and computer skills. The Instituto del Progreso Latino has a large computer center and many software programs for learning basic skills. In the BC, students attend 16 hours per week of VESL and then spend 24 hours per week in manufacturing courses. The manufacturing classes are held at Westside Technical College and are conducted in Spanish with a lot of back and forth translation between Spanish and English. The basic math skills and computer skills components of the VESL classes are also conducted in Spanish, but introduce English terms. The VESL instructors at Instituto have spent a great deal of time adapting the VESL program to fit the needs of the students and to emphasize vocational language and skills particular to manufacturing. They emphasize the need for a high level of connection and integration of the manufacturing skills and language skills. In addition to the skills classes, students attend a workplace communication course that includes resume writing, role-playing conflict resolution, and mock interviews. Often people within the manufacturing industry will attend and participate in mock interviews to prepare students for the job search and interview process in the most realistic scenario possible while still in training. Students in the program also benefit from counseling, case management, job placement assistance and follow-up, and the first steps to advanced certificate/associate degree programs in manufacturing technology, if they so choose.

Program outcomes reported:

Program completion:	About 98 percent
Job placement:	Men: 57 percent Women: 42 percent
Placement wages:	Men: $12.12/hour Women: $8.84/hour
Gains in English proficiency:	2-3 levels

Contact for more information: Betsy Sweet or Tom Dubois, Instituto del Progreso Latino, 2570 S. Blue Island Avenue, Chicago, IL 60608, (773) 890-0055

Jewish Vocational Services
San Francisco, California

Office Technology & Communications (OTC) Program

Program goals: The primary goal of the program is to train newcomers to the U.S. in computers, keyboarding and 10-key punch, workplace acculturation, job search and retention, and language skills necessary to attaining self-sufficiency. In addition, the program strives for an 80 percent job placement into positions such as general office clerk, administrative assistant, receptionist, file clerk, and processing clerk.

Program size and funding: Initially all the funding for the program came from the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) and the San Francisco Private Industry Council (PIC). Currently, the program is funded by ORR, PIC, CalWorks (California's welfare program), and more recently, Workforce Investment Act funding for dislocated workers. The budget for OTC is $4,400 per participant; 27 participants were served last year.

Population served: The OTC program participants are about 80 percent female, ranging in age from 18-62 with an average age of 40. Currently, the majority of students are from the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, although there are students from Africa, Indonesia, and Vietnam in the program. Students from the former Soviet Union tend to have postsecondary education in their native countries and previous work experience.

Program design: The OTC program is divided into two programs, day and evening. The day program is 18 weeks, 35 hours per week. The evening program is 20 weeks, 20 hours per week. The last four to six weeks of both programs are internships for 20 hours per week. All participants must be at a SPL level of 4 (language proficiency out of a 0-8 scale) before beginning training. Those wanting to enter the OTC program with lower levels of proficiency can attend vocational ESL (VESL) classes first. All potential participants have an individual interview with the program coordinator to discuss personal goals and determine if the OTC program is appropriate. Potential participants also take the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) test to determine language proficiency and an agency-based test on American work culture.

Participants attend daily computer and VESL classes from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Classes are taught through a variety of methods, emphasizing group learning and role playing. Participants learn skills including filing and business correspondence, conflict resolution, job search and retention, and all basic computer software. The internship is an important component of the program as students are able to put theory into practice. Furthermore, Jewish Vocational Service (JVS) has extensive connections with employers and maintains strong relationships with past employers who provide valuable feedback on the program. Many employers participate in mock interviews with students to ready them for the job search process. Last year, seven students entered employment at their internship site. The development of relationships with the business community has enhanced the success of JVS graduates because JVS is able to determine the needs of the business community through communication and feedback.

Program outcomes reported:

Program completion:	88 percent
Job placement:	74 percent
Placement wages:	Average: $10.42/hour Range: $10-$14/hour
Gains in literacy and/or English proficiency:	1-2 SPL levels
Job retention:	80 percent (6 months)

Contact for more information: Crystelle Egan, Program Coordinator/Office Training, Jewish Vocational Services, 77 Geary Street, Suite 401, San Francisco, CA 94108, (415) 782-6233

Lifetrack Resources

St. Paul, Minnesota

Functional Work English Program

Program goals: The primary goals of the program are to teach the English language and work skills necessary to integrate smoothly into the U.S. workforce. This includes understanding American work culture and the actions necessary to successfully adapt to it.

Program size and funding: The Functional Work English program is funded primarily by Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds (77 percent), and the remaining funding comes from the state and various sources. It began operation in 1994 and serves approximately 300 students per year. Lifetrack Resources contracts with a community-based organization, the Community Literacy Consortium, to operate the classes.

Population served: The program serves a varied population. When the program started, the students were primarily Hmong. It now serves Hmong, Somali, Russian, Latino, Vietnamese, Burmese, Ethiopian, Sudanese, and other populations. Approximately three-quarters of the students are receiving cash assistance (TANF). The educational backgrounds of the students vary, but a large proportion—about half—are at a pre-literate level.

Program design: The program has 13 classes in different locations in St. Paul, Minnesota, including offices of TANF employment services providers, a St. Paul public school adult education center, public housing projects, and employer worksites. Classes are offered at different levels, and students are placed based on their performance on the Basic English Skills Test (BEST) and Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) test. These tests are also used as post-tests to measure progression in English skills. Classes last six months and are 20 hours per week (both morning and afternoon sessions are available). Students can stay in class longer than six months if the teacher and the TANF case manager believe it would be beneficial.

Classes are taught in English, primarily by teachers who are not fluent in the language of the students. The curriculum focuses on language needed in the workplace and to prepare for work—including helping students explore and apply for possible jobs, understanding workplace culture, and assisting with "life skills" issues, such as health and housing issues. The initial curriculum has been changed and improved continuously over time, particularly when new ethnic groups enter the program. Staff view the continuous improvement as critical to its success. The classes are self-paced, focus on speaking skills, use a range of teaching methods, and provide access to a computer lab that the students use on a regular basis. The program also is involved in the early stages of a project involving diagnosis of learning disabilities in the non-English population.

The program contains several work-oriented features. Classes take field trips to visit employers every Friday to help students learn the types of jobs available, the culture of work in the United States, and the language used on the job. Work-related elements are used in the classroom, such as mock interviews, time clocks, and want ads. The program also has a "bus coach" that helps individuals learn how to navigate the public transportation system. The program also recently added an "advancement specialist" who helps students who have found a job navigate internal career ladders or look for better jobs at different employers. Teachers have developed a strong network of employers who hire individuals with limited English and help students find jobs. Cash assistance recipients also work directly with their TANF case managers to find employment while they are attending classes. Lifetrack staff provide written progress assessments to TANF

job counselors monthly, with an extensive written assessment with recommendations provided at six months.

Program outcomes reported: About 23 percent obtain employment while in the class, and following completion, about 45 percent find jobs.

Contact for more information: Jan Mueller, MFIP Director, 709 University Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55104, (651) 265-2321

Seattle Jobs Initiative

Seattle, Washington

Manufacturing-Focused Adult Basic Education (ABE)/English as a Second Language (ESL) Training

Program goals: The Seattle Jobs Initiative (SJI), in partnership with South Seattle Community College, has implemented a short-term manufacturing training program in welding. The goals of the program are to link low-income Seattle residents with good-paying jobs and to provide employers with skilled workers. The program's goal is to place people in jobs paying at least $9 per hour, with 60 percent of those who leave the program still employed after one year.

Program size and funding: The program serves a cohort of 22 people at a time and serves two to three cohorts per year. All funding comes from general revenue provided by the city of Seattle. The annual budget in 2002 for the manufacturing-focused training was $247,000.

Participant characteristics: The program is open to any Seattle resident age 18 and over with income at or below 175 percent of the poverty line. The program cannot take participants who are illiterate in their native language; individuals need to be able to read at at least 3rd-4th grade level when entering the first component of the program.

In 2002, most participants were male (83 percent) and nearly 80 percent were non-white (including 42 percent African American, 18 percent Asian, and 7 percent Hispanic). Ten percent had difficulty with English proficiency at enrollment in 2002 (a decrease compared to past years). Other significant barriers include criminal history (54 percent) and homelessness (21 percent). Most (71 percent) had annual income below $9,000 at point of program entry. Forty-three percent did not complete high school. Most (62 percent) did not work or worked less than 29 weeks in the past year. Program staff indicate that over time, they find that the number of barriers (e.g., English proficiency, criminal history, homelessness) is often significantly higher than disclosed by participants at intake; staff indicate that as many as 40 percent may actually be lacking in English language proficiency.

Program design: South Seattle Community College provides hard skills training in its welding program. SJI coordinates employer relations, job placement, soft skills training, case management, and retention services. Five community-based organizations provide recruitment, assessments, and case management. Manufacturing employers help design the curriculum, are members of an advisory board, serve as guest speakers during training, and hire graduates.

Initially, participants attend nine days of "boot camp" (for three hours a day, three days a week) intended to address any immediate crises. During boot camp, a goal is to ensure that those participants who entered the program below a 5th-6th grade reading level reach that level, as the program has found that trainees need to be able to function at that level in order to successfully complete the program. The program's assessment process relies on the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) test, and includes customized assessment for reading, writing, and math. All individuals, including those whose first language is not English, are assessed using English-language assessment instruments.

If at the end of the nine days, the individual has passed a drug test, and housing and child care have stabilized, the individual will go on to the manufacturing site, for a five day week, six hours per day program for 14 weeks. The course includes basic welding, blueprint reading, shop safety, forklift training, and first aid/CPR. SJI contracts with two instructors to carry out the SJI manufacturing ABE/ESL training—one is a specialist in English and

the other is focused on mathematics. During training, individuals attend ABE/ESL instruction two hours per day, four days a week. Tutoring is available two days a week before the start of the training day for those lacking English proficiency.

The training is individualized and geared to move trainees up two to three grade levels. In addition, the ABE/ESL is taught within a manufacturing context. Math and reading drills relate directly to what occurs on the manufacturing shop floor. An Individual Learning Plan (ILP) is developed for each student based upon test results and interviews. The ILP includes areas of strengths and weaknesses as well as an action plan for continuing education. Trainees begin with a full review of basic skills and instructors are made aware of each trainee's needs, which assures maximum utilization of valuable training time. The training itself is conducted in English. There is random drug testing throughout the program. An exit assessment tests for proficiency in ABE/ESL. In addition, participants who complete the training qualify for 15 community college credits, and training completers can qualify for a Washington Association of Building Officials certification.

Employers are extensively involved in the program. The program has an employer advisory board, and there are three site visits by employers to the training site during the 14 weeks. During their site visits, employers come to the classroom and do mock interviews. An employer liaison works with participants on resumes, provides job leads, acts as a reference, and helps ensure that resumes reflect the skill sets acquired in the training.

Program outcomes: Since the manufacturing ABE/ESL was first implemented in 2001, a total of seven training cohorts have been through the program. Approximately 100 trainees have been through the training and 70 percent completed the course. Ninety-five percent of the trainees who completed achieved proficiency in decimal and fraction conversions. Seventy percent achieved proficiency in basic algebra and 75 percent in geometric calculations related to volume and area. Also, 10 percent achieved proficiency in trigonometry. Each training cohort's subject content retention rate is at or above 75 percent.

For program placements, the average manufacturing placement wage was $10.92 as of December 2002. The job retention rate for program placements is 65 percent at three months and close to 50 percent at six months. SJI works closely with the Manufacturing Industrial Council, and recent graduates have obtained employment at firms such as Alaskan Cooper, Todd Shipyard, Exotic Metals, Kvichack Marine, and Seattle Boiler Works.

Contact for more information: Sherman Wilkins, Director, Operations and Best Practices, Seattle Jobs Initiative, 8th Avenue South, Suite 120, Seattle, Washington 98104, (206) 628-6975

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